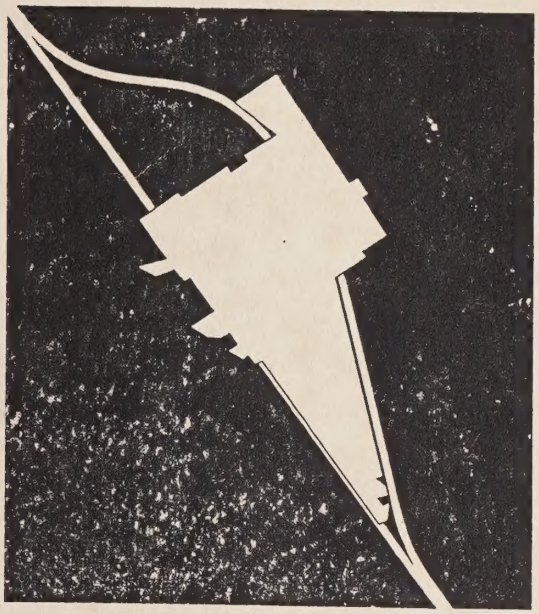
FINAL

GONZALES

GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



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BRADY AND ASSOCIATES, INC. PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Gonzales General Plan
Final Environmental Impact Report
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On July 15, 1996, the City Council certified that the FEIR for the Gonzales General Plan Update has been completed in compliance with CEQA and that the City Council reviewed and considered the information contained in the FEIR prior to considering the project.

Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

■ ■ ■

A. Purpose and Content of the EIR

This report is the second of two volumes, which together constitute the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the Gonzales General Plan. The first volume consists of the Draft EIR, dated December 1995, which includes a description of the proposed project, an assessment of the potential environmental effects associated with the General Plan, a set of recommended mitigation measures to avoid or reduce such effects, and project alternatives.

This second volume consists of Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR. It includes this introduction, verbatim copies of comments, and responses to those comments. Revisions to the text of the Draft EIR have been made in a newly fully revised version of that document. The Draft EIR and Final EIR have been prepared according to the provisions set forth in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

B. Environmental Review Process

According to State law, lead agencies are required to consult with and respond to comments received from public agencies having jurisdiction with respect to a proposed project, and to provide the general public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR. This Final EIR has been prepared to respond to comments received on the Draft EIR and to clarify any errors, omissions, or misinterpretation of the discussion or findings contained in the Draft EIR.

The Gonzales General Plan Draft EIR was made available for public review and comment from January 12, 1996 to February 26, 1996. Notice of availability was provided through a City-maintained mailing list for the project area, newspaper advertisements, AMBAG Regional Clearinghouse, and the State Clearinghouse. Copies of the Draft EIR were distributed to public agencies and individuals who requested a copy of the report. In addition,

copies of the Draft EIR were made available for public review at the Gonzales Public Library and Gonzales City Hall.

Copies of all written comments received on the Draft EIR are contained in this volume. Letters and individual comments are assigned numbers, indicated in the right margin. Responses corresponding to the numbered comments follow each letter.

The Revised Draft EIR and this Final EIR are available for public review at the City of Gonzales Planning Department. All agencies which submitted comments have received copies of responses to their comments.

C. How to Use This Report

This report is divided into three chapters, which are outlined below. Each of these sections has its own purpose and serves, in conjunction with the Revised Draft EIR, to aid the reader in fully understanding the Gonzales General Plan and its implications.

Chapter I, *Introduction*, notes the purposes and contents of the Final EIR, the environmental review process, and the contents of this report.

Chapter II, *List of Commentors*, includes a list of all agencies, organizations and individuals who submitted written comments on the Draft EIR.

Chapter III, *Comments and Responses*, includes a reproduction of each letter received during the public review period, and responses to each comment.

Chapter II
LIST OF COMMENTORS

■ ■ ■

1. Melvin Yee, P.E., Department of Health Services, State of California, February 20, 1996

2. Nicolas Papadakis, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, February 15, 1996

3. Janet Brennan, Monterey Bay United Air Pollution Control District, January 29, 1996

4. Robert Slimmon, Jr., Planning and Building Inspection Department, Monterey County, February 21, 1996

5. Catherine S. West, Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission, February 26, 1996

6. Joe Lopez, Transportation Agency for Monterey County, January 30, 1996

7. Leigh Jordan, Historical Resources Information Systems, Northwest Information Center, February 1, 1996

8. John Prader, Community Housing Improvement Systems and Planning Association, Inc., February 21, 1996

9. Harold Freiman, Lozano Smith, Smith Woliver & Behrens, February 23, 1996

Chapter III
COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

■ ■ ■

This chapter contains copies of letters that were submitted to the City of Gonzales as comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report, along with responses to each letter. Each comment is labeled with a reference number in the right margin, and the responses following each letter are keyed to these comment numbers.

Where the same comment or very similar comment has been made in more than one letter, a response may direct the reader to a previous response. Where a response requires revisions to the Draft EIR, changes have been made to the text and are shown in the Revised Draft EIR.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY PETE WILSON, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
2151 BERKELEY WAY
BERKELEY, CA 94704-1011

February 20, 1996

Ms. Judith L. Paul
Assistant Planning Director
City of Gonzales
P.O. Box 647
Salinas, CA 93926

Dear Ms. Paul:

CITY OF GONZALES DRAFT GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR) FOR SAME PROJECT (SCH #96013027)

The State Department of Health Services (Department), Drinking Water Field Operations Branch, has received copies of the above-mentioned documents for comments. The Department appreciates this opportunity and offers the following comments:

1. The proposed General Plan Update would have a significant impact on the existing municipal water (collection and delivery) system of the City as a result of the increase in land use and accompanying growth of population. To mitigate, the Plan would adopt policies and actions that include, among other things, the construction of new wells and water distribution facilities to meet the increase in water demand.

   The Department acknowledges and supports the Plan's proposed mitigation measures regarding the impact on the municipal water system. As further comments on water supply capacity and service connection, the Department would like to mention of Sections 64562 and 64568 of Title 22, California Code of Regulations. These sections specify that sufficient water shall be available from sources (wells) and distribution reservoirs to supply adequately, dependably and safely the total requirements of all users (including the new service connections) under maximum demand conditions before the new service connections are added to the water system, and that these new connections shall not cause pressure at an existing service connection to be reduced below the minimum allowed pressure. So that the Department may be able to review the City's compliance with Sections 64562 and 64568, it is the intention of the Department to require -- and by copy of this letter, the City is hereby informed of this requirement -- for the City to submit a report on such compliance prior to addition of new service connections projected in the General Plan.

1-1

2. To provide for a better and quick reference, the Department recommends that Table 1, Summary of Impact and Mitigation Measures, and referenced chapter such as Chapter IV, of the DEIR document should include the impact and mitigation measures on the existing municipal water (collection and delivery) system. The Department believes that impact on the water (collection and delivery) system is one of the first issues that normally comes to one's mind regarding plans and projects involving significant growth and development. 1-2

If you have any questions, please contact Adelio B. Quiogue at (510) 540-3100.

Sincerely,

Melvin Yee, P.E.
District Engineer
Monterey Distinct
Drinking Water Field Operations Branch

cc: Monterey County Health Department
Environmental Health

Mr. Carlos Lopez
City of Gonzales
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926

State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

Department of Health Services
DWTPB-EIR Coordinator

Response to Letter 1
Melvin Yee, Department of Health Services, State of California

Response 1-1: The City of Gonzales will submit a report on compliance with Sections 64562 and 64568 of Title 22, California Code of Regulations, regarding water availability, before adding new service connections projected in the General Plan.

Response 1-2: Municipal water supply and delivery system impacts are not listed in Table 1, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures because Table 1 summarizes only those impacts that are determined to be significant.

Table 1 does include one water-related significant unavoidable impact (INFRA-1) and two mitigation measures (INFRA-1a and INFRA-1b) on page 14 of the Draft EIR. That impact relates to recharge of the groundwater basin.

Chapter IV of the Draft EIR considers all potential impacts of the General Plan on water supply and water quality in the General Plan in the subsection Infrastructure and Municipal Services. Setting information is provided on pages 114-119. Impacts and mitigation measures are considered on pages 127-128.

AMBAG

ASSOCIATION OF MONTEREY BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

(408) 883-3750 *FAX (408) 883-3755*

Office Location: 445 Reservation Road, Suite G, Marina
P.O. Box 809, Marina, CA 93933-0809

February 15, 1996

Judith Paul
Gonzales Planning Department
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926

*RE: **MCH# 029609** - Draft EIR for the Gonzales General Plan Update*

Dear Ms. Paul:

Thank you for providing AMBAG staff the opportunity to comment on the Draft General Plan EIR. We have reviewed both the draft General Plan and its draft EIR (DEIR) and have the following comments:

Water Quality: The DEIR does not address the increased amount of urban and/or industrial runoff pollutants that would be caused by build-out of Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the proposed General Plan. Potential mitigations for increased urban runoff that should be considered include requiring the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the design and construction of new development. **2-1**

BMPs for urban development include measures such as detention/percolation basins, grease/oil traps (with regular maintenance programs), vegetated buffer strips (using native vegetation), use of porous paving materials, street sweeping programs (especially preceding "first-flush" events), requiring use of native plant species for landscaping (to reduce use of pesticides and fertilizers and irrigation related erosion which can transport these), and possibly cisterns for storm water storage (perhaps for later use in irrigation). Also, an important design consideration for limiting polluted runoff is to minimize *directly connected impervious surfaces* (e.g. roof gutter downspouts should drain onto permeable bare ground instead of impervious driveways or walkways). Further information on storm runoff water quality control is available from the Central Coast RWQCB in San Luis Obispo and also in AMBAG's Urban Runoff Water Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Draft General Plan EIR. Please address any questions regarding these comments to Frank Barron of the AMBAG staff.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Papadakis
Executive Director

cc: Gerry Laumer, Caltrans District 5
Brad Hagemann, Central Coast RWQCB

Response to Letter 2
Nicolas Papadakis, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

Response 2-1: In response to this comment, a significance criterion regarding water quality has been added to page 77 of the Revised Draft EIR. A section that discusses the General Plan's policies and implementing actions that address urban and industrial runoff has been added to page 79 of the Revised Draft EIR.

In response to the comment regarding the impacts of the alternatives on urban/industrial runoff, sections have been added to the Alternatives Analysis chapter of the Revised Draft EIR. Further discussions have been added to pages 144, 148, and 150 for Alternative 2 (No Project/Limited Development), Alternative 4 (Commercial Center), and Alternative 5 (Agricultural Center), respectively. Alternative 3 (Residential Community) discusses the increased amount of runoff from residential areas in the Draft EIR.

In addition, page 134 of the Draft EIR states that "the three land use alternatives, Residential Community, Commercial Center, and Agricultural Center, were developed on the assumption that the policies of the General Plan would be in place, except as modified by the nature of the alternative." Consequently, the impacts discussion on relevant policies and implementing actions that has been added to page 77 of the Revised Draft EIR would also apply to these three land use alternatives.

MONTEREY BAY
Unified Air Pollution Control District
serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER
Doug Quetin

24580 Silver Cloud Court • Monterey, California 93940 • 408/647•9411 • FAX 408/647•8501

January 29, 1996

Judith L. Paul
City of Gonzales
109 Fourth Street
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926

SUBJECT: DRAFT EIR FOR CITY OF GONZALES GENERAL PLAN

Dear Ms. Paul:

Staff has reviewed the City of Gonzales draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report and has the following comments on the General Plan:

1. Page V-11, para. 6. Federal and State standards address inhalable particulates (PM_{10}), not total suspended particulate matter.

2. Page V-11, para. 6. Staff recommends the following revision: "recommended emission reduction ~~quotas~~ strategies for stationary and mobile pollution sources..."

3. Page V-12, para. 2. Staff recommends the following revision: "Motor vehicles are the largest anthropogenic (man-made) source of pollution in the State and in the Salinas Valley as well for most pollutants...and anthropogenic hydrocarbons in the Valley can be attributed to cars and trucks." **3-1**

4. Page V-33, Policy 6.5. Staff recommends the following revision: "Promote the use of street trees as a means of reducing roadside temperatures that in turn reduce summertime emissions of ozone-forming hydrocarbon ~~removing gaseous~~ pollutants~~ and particulate matter~~,..."

The following comments pertain to the Draft EIR:

5. Page 103, para. 2. Staff recommends the following revision: "Motor vehicles are the largest anthropogenic (man-made) source of gaseous pollutants in the Salinas valley." **3-2**

6. Page 104, para. 1. Staff recommends the following revision:

CHAIR: Alan Styles, *Salinas*
VICE CHAIR: Ruth Kesler, *San Benito County*
DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS
Jack Barlich, *Del Rey Oaks*
Larry Cain, *San Juan Bautista*
Edith Johnsen, *Monterey County*
Fred Keeley, *Santa Cruz County*
John Myers, *King City*
Judy Pennycook, *Monterey County*
Oscar Rios, *Watsonville*
Simon Salinas, *Monterey County*
Walt Symons, *Santa Cruz County*

"...State Air Resources ~~Control~~ Board ~~operates~~ implements the California Clean Air Act."

7. Page 104, para. 2. Staff recommends the following revision: "recommends emission reduction ~~quotas~~ strategies for stationary sources..."

8. Page 104, para. 2. The District has adopted the 1994 AQMP, which updates the 1991 AQMP.

9. Page 104, para. 3. Staff recommends that the paragraph be replaced with the following: "The ambient air quality standards are important for the General Plan process because planned growth that exceeds AMBAG growth forecasts in the 1994 Air Quality Management Plan could jeopardize regional attainment of the ozone standard. Further, future traffic congestion hotspots from planned growth could result in localized exceedances of air quality standards for carbon monoxide.

10. Page 104, para. 3. The Salinas station is the closest air monitoring station operated by the District. However, the National Park Service operates a closer station at the Pinnacles. There have been recorded exceedances of the State ozone standard at the Pinnacles for several years. **3-2**

11. Page 105, Table 9. The federal annual NO_2 standard (primary and secondary) is 0.053 ppm. The State 24-hour SO_2 standard is 0.04 ppm (105 $\mu g/m^3$).

12. Page 105, Table 10. The ambient air quality standards for TSP have been rescinded in favor of standards for inhalable particulate matter (PM_{10}). The State standards are 30 $\mu g/m^3$ (annual) and 50 $\mu g/m^3$ (24-hour), while the federal primary and secondary standards are 50 $\mu g/m^3$ (annual) and 150 $\mu g/m^3$ (24-hour).

13. Page 105, para. 1. Staff recommends the following revision: "...growth within the planning area will ~~meet federal~~ result in violations of State air quality standards, the MBUAPCD utilizes ~~General Plan buildout and~~ AMBAG population projections to calculate cumulative growth in ozone-forming emissions."

14. Page 105, para. 3. Staff recommends that the analysis of consistency with the outdated 1991 AQMP be deleted. Instead, AMBAG should be contacted for a formal consistency determination of the General Plan with the 1994 AQMP. The updated determination should be used to determine the project's impact on regional air quality. **3-3**

15. Page 158, para. 5. The reference to the Bay Area basin should be changed to the North Central Coast Air Basin.

16. Page 163, para. 2. Unless the EIR explains why Gonzales' location at the floor of the valley would particularly affect air quality more than another location, this statement should be deleted. The last sentence "The decrease...local plans" should be deleted.

17. Page 163, para. 3. Staff recommends the following revision: "These effects on air quality would not represent a significant adverse impact, assuming that such development remained consistent with growth projections in the AQMP and District rules and regulations."

3-4

Thank you for the opportunity to review the documents. If you have any questions, please call Douglas Kim of our planning staff.

Sincerely,

Janet Brennan

Janet Brennan
Senior Planner, Planning and
Air Monitoring Division

cc: Nicolas Papadakis
File: 3442

Response to Letter 3
Janet Brennan, Monterey Bay United Air Pollution Control District

Response 3-1: Although the objective of this Comments and Responses document is to address comments received on the Draft EIR, the District's comments regarding the Gonzales General Plan are noted; the District's recommended revisions have been made to the General Plan.

Response 3-2: The District's recommended revisions have been made in the appropriate pages of the Revised Draft EIR.

Response 3-3: In response to this comment, the City of Gonzales has since requested a formal consistency determination of the General Plan with the 1994 AQMP. The previous analysis of consistency with the 1991 AQMP has been revised in light of this more recent consistency determination on page 110 of the Revised Draft EIR.

Response 3-4: The District's recommended revisions have been made in the appropriate pages of the Revised Draft EIR.

MONTEREY COUNTY

PLANNING AND BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 1208 SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902 (408) 755-5025

ROBERT SLIMMON, JR.
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING INSPECTION

RECEIVED MAR 0 8 1996

February 21, 1996

Ms. Judith L. Paul
Assistant Planning Director
City of Gonzales
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926

SUBJECT: Draft General Plan & Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the City of Gonzales

Dear Ms. Paul:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the City's Draft General Plan and the accompanying DEIR. Planning staff has reviewed the documents and the following comments are provided:

Figure I-2 (attachment 1) of the Gonzales Draft General Plan delineates a planning area which extends beyond the City's current sphere of influence (attachment 2). The City's planning area is within the County's jurisdiction and is designated as "Farmlands, 40 acre minimum" pursuant to the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan (CSVAP) Land Use Map. Figure 3 (attachment 3) of the CSVAP identifies "Important Farmlands." According to the County's map, the planning area delineated in the City's Draft General Plan includes both "prime farmlands" and "farmlands of statewide importance." As a result, the DEIR should identify and analyze potential impacts to the prime farmland in the County, as well as evaluate the 3 land use alternatives proposed (attachment 4) for compatibility with the adjacent prime farmland. In addition, both the DEIR and the General Plan need to analyze the project's consistency with policies in the County's General Plan and the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan relative to agriculture. These policies include, but may not be limited to, the following: 4-1

CSVAP:
26.1.13.2 26.1.14.2 30.0.3.1 35.1.3 35.1.4 36.0.4

MONTEREY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN:
30.0.1 30.0.2 30.0.3 30.0.4 30.0.5 30.0.6 30.0.7

For your reference, the language for each policy listed above is attached (attachment 5).

Thank you again for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft documents. County Planning staff can provide copies of the applicable planning documents discussed in this letter upon request.

Should you have any questions or need additional information regarding the County's planning policies and regulations, please contact Ann Towner, Senior Planner, at 755-5310.

Sincerely,

Robert Slimmon, Jr., Director
Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department

cc: Members, Monterey County Board of Supervisors
Mr. Ernest K. Morishita, County Administrative Officer
Mr. Douglas Holland, County Counsel
Ms. Ann Towner, Senior Planner

Attachments:
1. Figure I-2 (Planning Area) from the City's Draft General Plan
2. Figure I-3 (Sphere of Influence) from the City's Draft General Plan
3. Figure 3 (Important Farmlands) from the County's Central Salinas Valley Area Plan
4. Figures 19 (Residential Community Alternative); Figure 20 (Commercial Center Alternative); and Figure 21 (Agricultural Center Alternative) from the City's DEIR. NOTE: Plans for Proposed Alternative 1 (No Development) and Alternative 2 (No Project/Limited Development) are not attached.
5. County Agricultural Policies

AT:DEIR/GONZALES
(Disc: Reports #179)

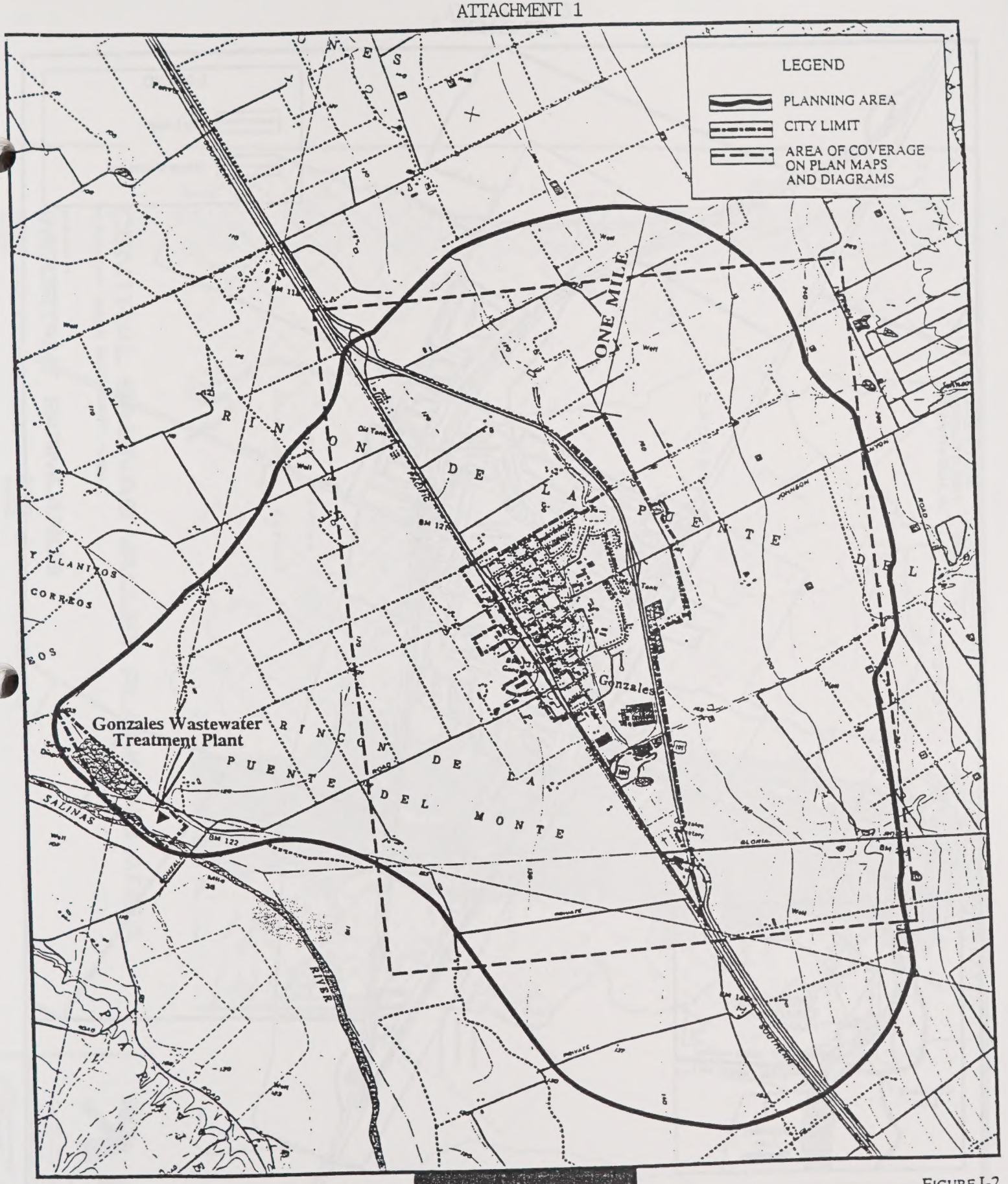
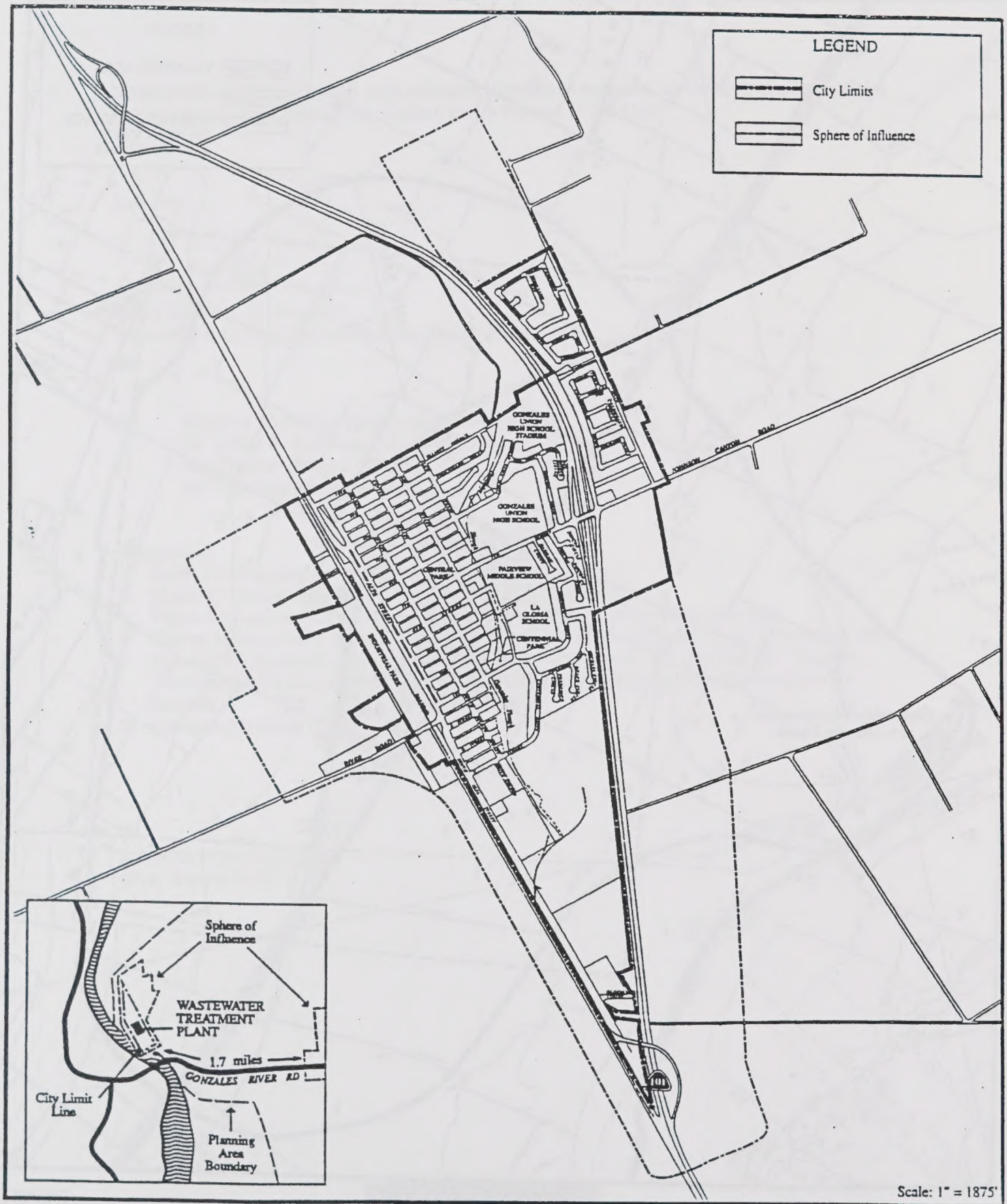


FIGURE I-2
Gonzales Planning Area

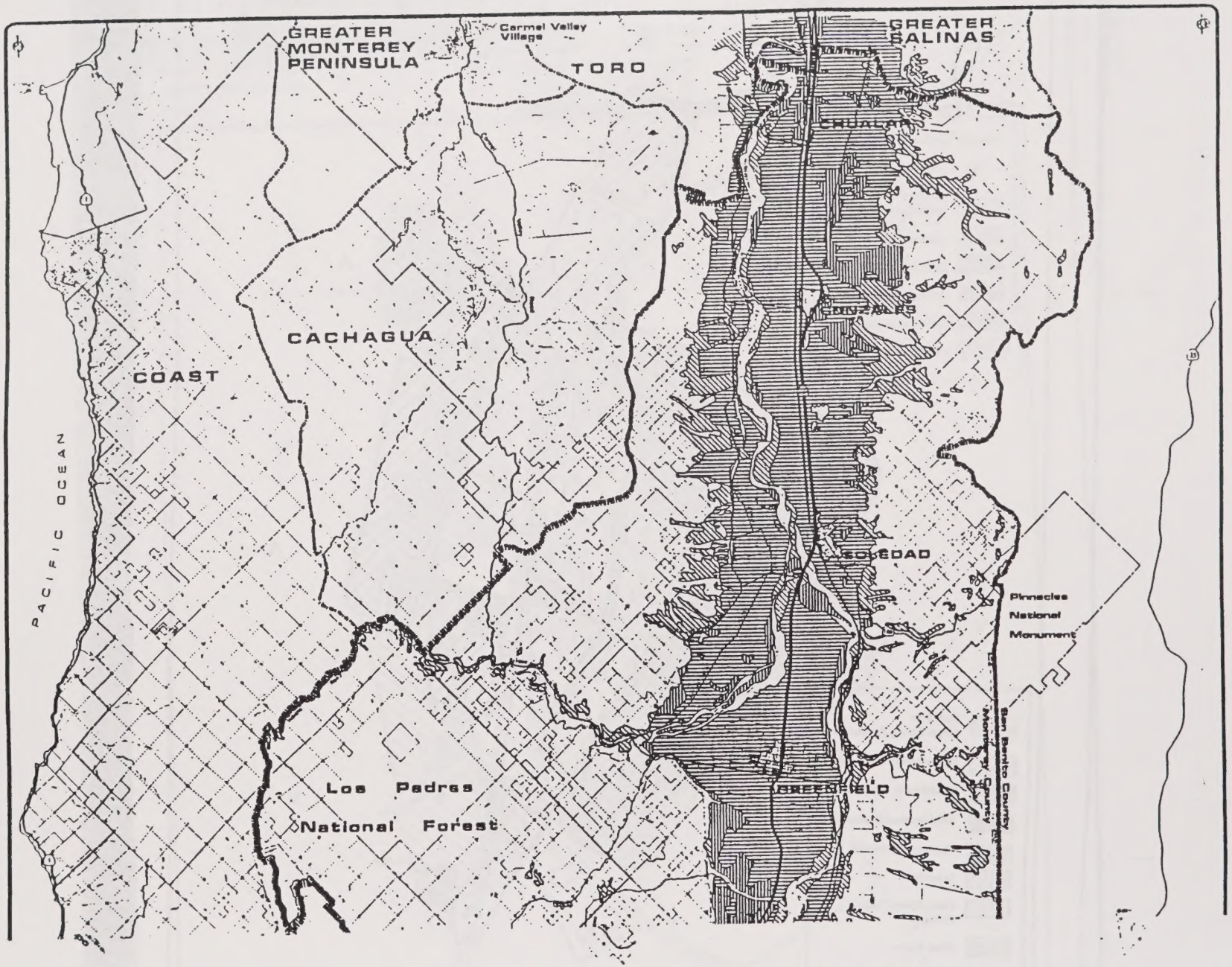
GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN



GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN

FIGURE 1-3
Sphere of Influence

ATTACHMENT 3



CENTRAL SALINAS VALLEY PLANNING AREA

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY

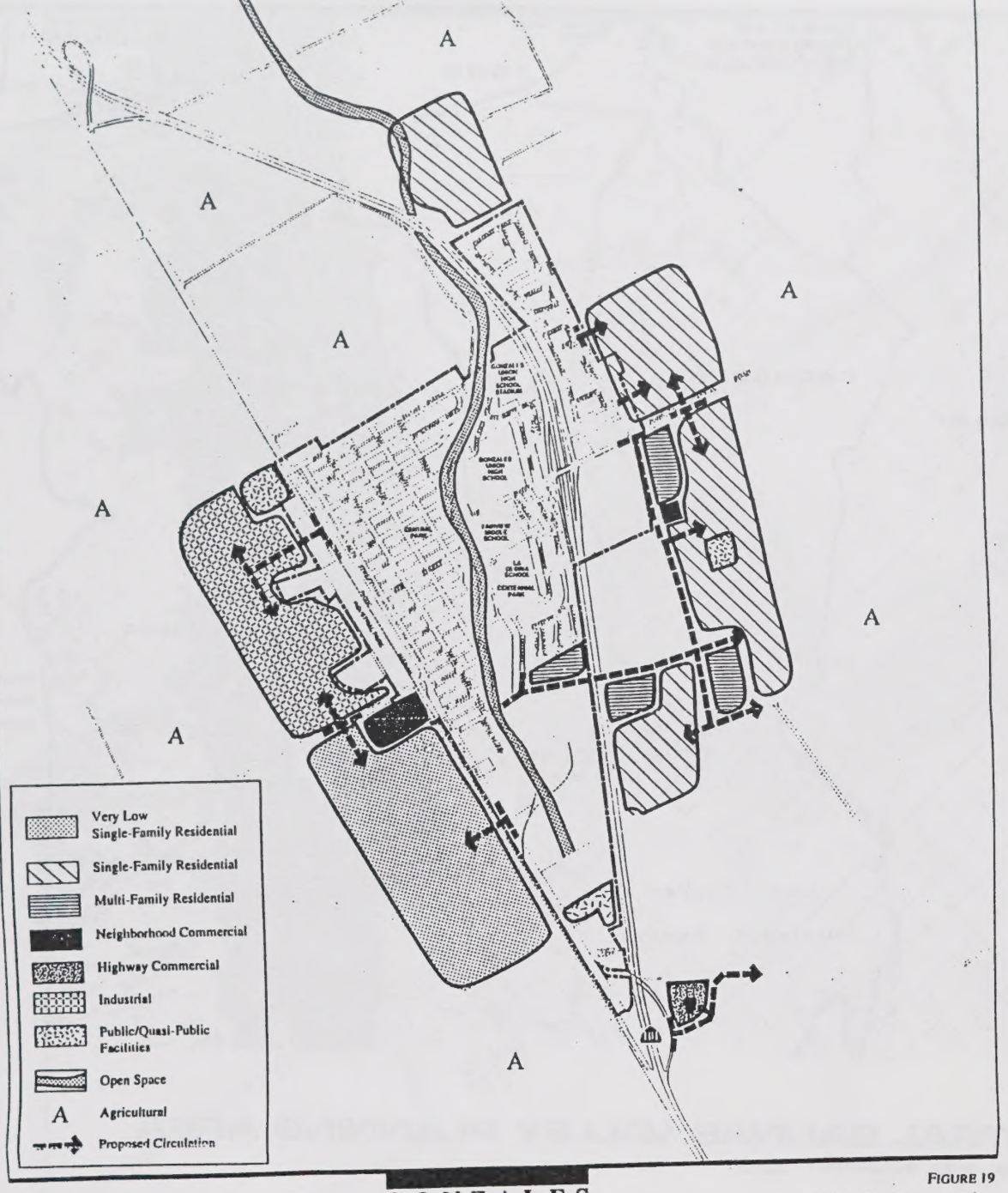
FIGURE 3

IMPORTANT FARMLANDS

PRIME FARMLANDS

UNIQUE FARMLANDS

Monterey County



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GENERAL PLAN
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FIGURE 19
Residential Community Alternative

ATTACHMENT 4

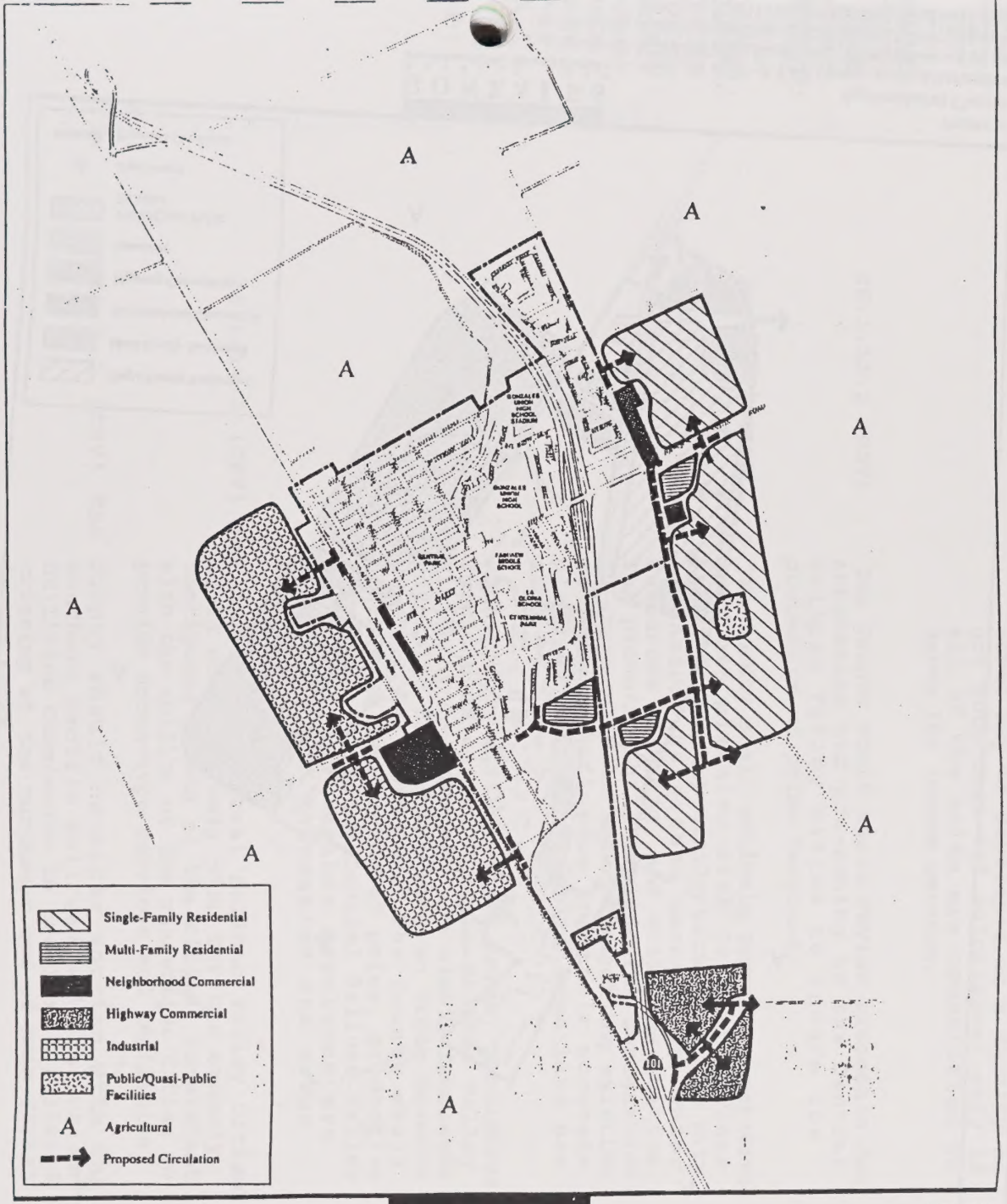

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FIGURE 20
Commercial Center Alternative

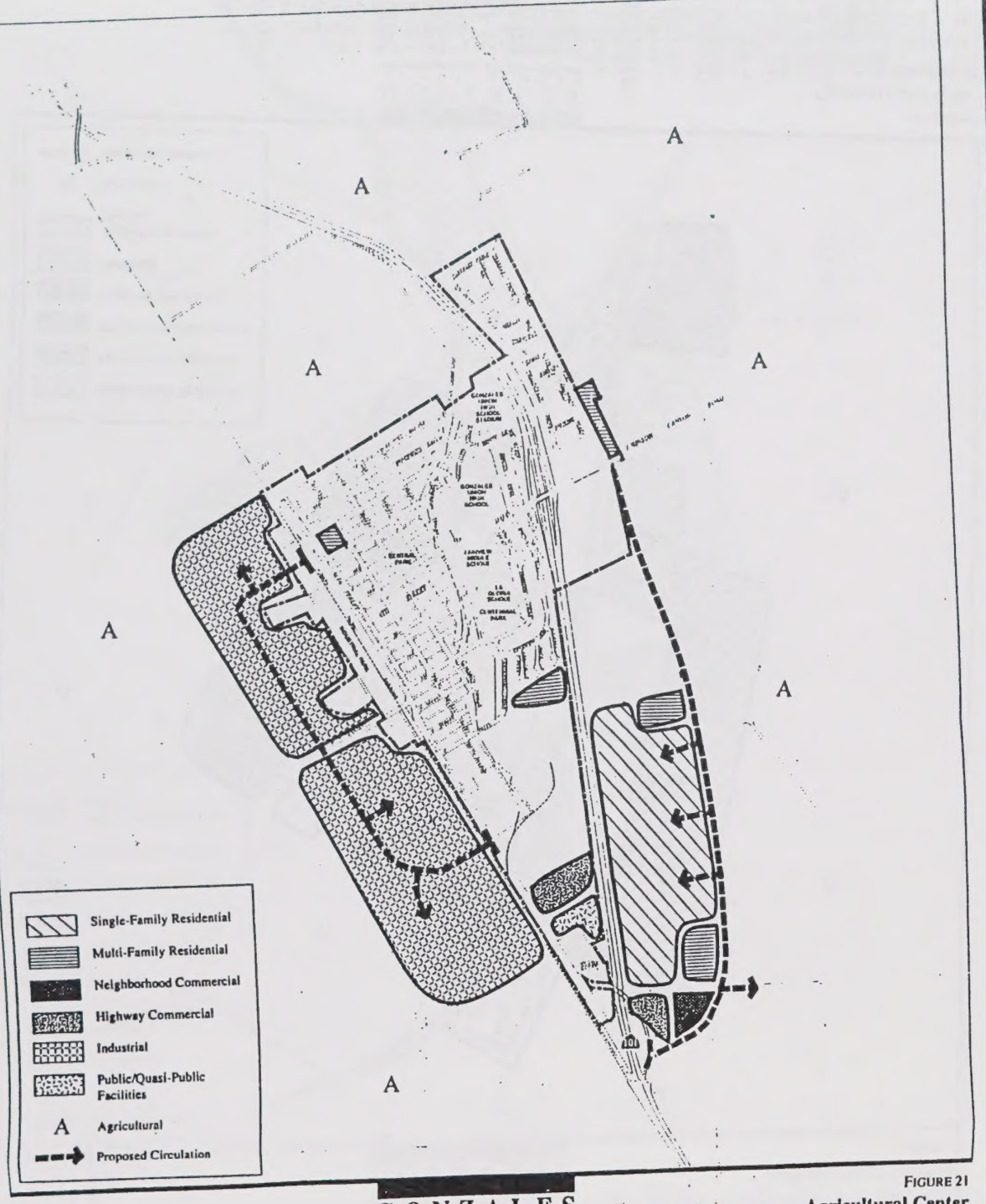

FIGURE 21
Agricultural Center Alternative

5. On the Broome property, not more than 4 acres may be developed at a density of not more than "18 units/acre" only if all of the units are constructed to serve low income persons.

26.1.13.2 (CSV) The County staff shall review proposals for annexation and pre-zoning by the Central Salinas Valley Cities to ensure the protection of prime farmland.

26.1.14.1 (CSV) The County shall actively pursue cooperative land use planning with Central Salinas Valley Cities especially with regard to city expansion, watershed management, water resources planning, and soil conservation. The planning shall include the designation of areas of Urban Reserve adjoining existing Spheres of Influence and their accurate placement on the Planning Area land use maps.

26.1.14.2 (CSV) The County shall protect prime, productive farmland adjoining Central Salinas Valley Cities by designating less viable farmlands adjoining the Cities with an Urban Reserve overlay designation. The County shall discourage annexation of prime, productive farmlands adjoining Central Salinas Valley Cities if less viable farmlands are available for annexation and urban expansion.

26.1.14.3 (CSV) The County and Central Salinas Valley Cities shall cooperatively plan for the orderly, contiguous growth of the Cities, consistent with the ability of the respective Cities to provide urban-type services and facilities.

27.2.3 (CSV) The County should consider working with the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Public Utilities Commission to provide a railroad crossing at the northwest end of Main Street in San Lucas.

28.1.1.1 (CSV) Recreation and visitor serving land uses for the Paraiso Hot Springs property may be permitted in accordance with a required comprehensive development plan. The resort may include such uses as a lodge, individual cottages, a visitor center, recreational vehicle accommodations, restaurant, shops, stables, tennis courts, aquaculture, mineral water bottling, hiking trails, vineyards,

6. the proposed development will not generate levels of runoff which will either cause erosion or adversely affect surface water resources as determined by the Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

28.1.1.3 (CSV) All recreation and visitor-serving commercial land uses shall require a use permit on sites of 10 acres or less. On sites greater than 10 acres, visitor serving recreation and commercial uses may be permitted in accordance with both a use permit and a required comprehensive development plan. The comprehensive development plan shall address hydrology, water quantity and quality, sewage disposal, fire safety, access, drainage, soils, and geology.

29.1.1.1 (CSV) Industries locating adjacent to San Lucas shall be non-polluting in nature. Industries related to agriculture shall be encouraged.

30.0.1.1 (CSV) The Old Mission Union School property, APN 165-033-02 & 165-073-16, shall be designated as a special treatment area. Winery-related facilities including a food service, gift shop, and a reception hall may be conditionally allowed by use permit in the special treatment area. The facilities shall be subject to the review and requirements of the Monterey County Public Works Department, Director of Environmental Health, Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and Director of Planning.

30.0.3.1 (CSV) Divisions of farmland shall be permitted only when such division does not adversely affect the land's long-term agricultural financial viability and shall be conditioned to ensure continued long-term agricultural use.

30.0.3.2 (CSV) The area bounded by Old Stage Road, Encinal Road, and Quail Creek; and the area south of Potter Road to a depth of 1,000 feet shall be designated as a "special treatment" area. The "special treatment" area shall permit on-site-soil-dependent agricultural greenhouses. The minimum parcel size in the area shall be 10 acres. Subdivision of land in the area shall only be approved subject to the following conditions:

terrain, inadequate soil quality, or other physical constraints which limit agricultural productivity.

2. The proposed support facilities are a necessary accessory to the cultivation, harvesting, or processing of crops raised by the applicant on the same property where the support facilities are proposed.

3. The maintenance and operation of the proposed support facilities will not impair the ability to produce crops on either the remainder of the subject property or neighboring properties.

Agricultural Support Facilities shall be subject to the following standards as determined by the Director of Planning:

a. Agricultural Support Facilities may be conditionally allowed in connection with the cultivation, harvesting, processing, or storage of crops grown on lands in close proximity to the subject property, especially when the maximum amount of prime farmland for production would be preserved, expanded, or enhanced.

b. The land on which the support facilities are constructed shall not be subdivided from the remainder of the subject property.

c. Agricultural Support Facilities shall be compatible with land uses on neighboring properties.

35.1.3 (CSV) Conversion of uncultivated lands to crop lands shall not be permitted on slopes in excess of 25%.

35.1.4 (CSV) Conversion of historically uncultivated lands to farmlands on parcels having an average cross slope of 15% - 25% shall require a use permit. Approval of the use permit shall follow the submission of an adequate agricultural management plan. The plan should include an analysis of soils; erosion potential and control; water demand and availability; proposed methods of water conservation and water quality protection; preservation of important vegetation and

wildlife habitats; crop rotation schedules; and such other means appropriate to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture on the parcel.

Holding Capacity

36.0.4 (CSV) Except in areas designated as medium or high density residential, or in areas designated as commercial or industrial where residential uses may be allowed, an applicant wishing to apply for a subdivision under the countywide General Plan and Central Salinas Valley Area Plan must use the following procedures to calculate the maximum density that can be considered in order to prepare an application consistent with, or less than, the maximum allowable density:

1. One factor in density determination shall be the land use designation. The maximum density allowable under the Area Plan land use designation for a parcel shall be divided into the total number of acres found within the parcel. For example, a 100-acre parcel with a maximum density of 1 unit per 2.5 acres would have a density of 40 sites.

2. The slope of the property shall be determined and the slope density formula defined in Policy 3.2.4 applied. For example, a 100-acre parcel might consist of 50 percent of the land having a slope of over 30 percent and the other 50 percent below 19 percent. The maximum density allowable on that parcel as calculated according to slope would be 50 sites.

3. All of the policies of the Area Plan and countywide General Plan must be applied to the parcel. Any policies resulting in a decrease in density must be tabulated. This decrease in density would then be subtracted from the maximum density allowable under the slope formula.

4. The maximum density allowable according to the Area Plan land use designation (Step 1 above) and the maximum density allowable according to Plan policies

29.3.4 In designating industrial areas, the County shall consider the proximity of other compatible land uses which have similar levels of utility and service requirements.

Agricultural

30 GOAL

TO PROTECT ALL VIABLE FARMLANDS DESIGNATED AS PRIME, OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE, UNIQUE, OR OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE FROM CONVERSION TO AND ENCROACHMENT OF NON-AGRICULTURAL USES.

Policies

30.0.1 The County shall prevent non-agricultural uses which could interfere with the potential of normal agricultural operations on viable farmlands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance.

30.0.2 The County shall require that permanent, well-defined buffer areas be provided as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent to agricultural land uses on viable farmlands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance. These buffer areas shall be dedicated in perpetuity, shall be of sufficient size to protect agriculture from the impacts of incompatible development and to mitigate against the effects of agricultural operations on adjacent land uses, and shall be credited as open space.

30.0.3 The County shall allow division of viable farmland designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance only for exclusive agricultural purposes, when demonstrated not to be detrimental to the agricultural viability of adjoining parcels.

30.0.4 The County shall make every effort to preserve, enhance, and expand viable agricultural land uses on farmland designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance through application of "agricultural" land use designations and encouragement of large lot agricultural zoning.

30.0.5 The County shall support other policies and programs that provide tax and economic incentives which will enhance competitive capabilities of farms and ranches, thereby insuring long-term preservation, enhancement, and expansion of viable agricultural lands. Examples of these policies and programs may include the following:

- establishment of a program to purchase and lease back agricultural lands near urban or developing areas for continued agricultural use.
- use of open space easements.
- use of Williamson Act contracts.

30.0.6 Greenhouses, mushroom farms, and similar agriculture enterprises that are not on-site soil dependent or which degrade soil capabilities shall not be located on the County's prime farmlands and farmlands of statewide importance. This policy shall not limit uses accessory to soil dependent uses.

30.0.7 Where it can be demonstrated to enhance agricultural operations in areas designated for agricultural land use, farm labor housing may be considered subject to appropriate health, environmental, and growth management policy review. Farm labor housing projects shall be located to minimize the conversion of viable agricultural lands and shall be consistent with the nature of the surrounding land uses.

Public/Quasi-Public

31 GOAL
TO ENCOURAGE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ONLY IN THOSE AREAS WHERE THERE IS PROVISION FOR AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

Objective
31.1 Ensure coordinated, on-going planning for public services and facilities.

Policies
31.1.1 The County shall designate for future development only those areas which have adequate public services and facilities capacity or will provide them prior to development.

31.1.2 The County shall designate adequate locations for future development of needed public services and facilities.

32 GOAL
TO ENCOURAGE PROPER PLANNING OF PUBLIC LANDS SO THAT USES ON PUBLIC LANDS ARE COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING AND PLANNED USES ON ADJACENT PRIVATELY-OWNED LANDS.

Objective
32.1 Review and coordinate the planning of public lands.

Policies
32.1.1 The County shall coordinate its planning activities with and request to be included in the planning efforts undertaken by other public agencies with landholdings in Monterey County.

32.1.2 The County shall distribute copies of its General Plan to each public agency with landholdings in the County, requesting that any planned public land uses be compatible with private uses on adjacent lands.

32.1.3 The planning of adjacent public and private lands should be undertaken as a joint effort between all agencies involved.

Response to Letter 4
Robert Slimmon, Jr., Planning and Building Inspection Department, Monterey County

Response 4-1: The impacts of the General Plan on the surrounding farmland and its consistency with the Monterey County General Plan and Central Salinas Valley Area Plan are addressed on pages 42-45 of the Draft EIR. Conversion of prime farmland to urban uses is discussed on pages 42 and 43, where it is identified as a significant unavoidable impact. Potential incompatibility of urban uses with adjacent farmland is addressed on pages 43 and 44, where General Plan policies that would mitigate this impact are identified.

The discussion on the Monterey County General Plan and the Salinas Valley Area Plan has been revised on pages 40 and 41 of the Revised Draft EIR to include policies from the County General Plan and Salinas Valley Area Plan that are relevant to the Gonzales General Plan. However, the revised discussion does not include all the policies listed in the comment letter because they do not all pertain to the General Plan. For example, policies 30.0.6 and 30.0.7 of the Monterey County General Plan are related to non-on-site soil dependent agricultural operations, and farm labor housing, respectively; the Gonzales General Plan does not specifically propose uses related to either policy.

The General Plan's consistency with both Plans is addressed on pages 44 and 45; however, in response to this comment, a section has been added to page 45 of the Revised Draft EIR addressing consistency with specific policies in these plans.

The impacts of the alternatives on agricultural land, including the compatibility of land use alternatives with adjacent prime agricultural land, are addressed on pages 137, 139, 141, 144 and 145 of the Draft EIR. In response to this comment, analyses of the alternatives' consistencies with the Monterey County General Plan and the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan have been added to these pages in the Revised Draft EIR.

MONTEREY COUNTY

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

(408) 755-5065 P.O. BOX 180, SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902

JAMES J. COLANGELO
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

February 26, 1996

Ms. Judith Paul
Assistant Planning Director
City of Gonzales
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926

Dear Ms. Paul: Judy

Thank you for providing the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) an opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City's General Plan. LAFCO would like to use this EIR when considering revisions to the City's Sphere of Influence.

LAFCO is required by State law to consider several factors when considering Spheres of Influence. These include: a) the present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands; b) the present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area; c) the present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services which the agency provides or is authorized to provide; d) and the existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area.

To assure that the EIR addresses those impacts related to the reconsideration of the City's Sphere, the following information needs to be included:

1. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15124 (d), the EIR needs to indicate that LAFCO will be a Responsible Agency for the Sphere of Influence determinations, and that the EIR is intended to be used for those determinations and any Planning Concern Area designation that is to be requested. **5-1**

2. To minimize the need for subsequent environmental documentation, the City should designate those portions of its Sphere where annexations would be appropriate in the next five years as Urban Service Areas, and in the next five to twenty years as Urban Transition Areas. The attached LAFCO policies describe these designations more fully. The EIR should analyze the potential impacts especially on community services, associated with these designations. **5-2**

3. In addition to the policy included on page 41, the EIR should also describe the other LAFCO Sphere of Influence policies that are applicable to this project. A copy of the policies has been included for your information. 5-3

4. The Sphere of Influence on all the Figures included in the EIR should be designated as "Proposed" to avoid any confusion with the Sphere that will be ultimately approved. 5-4

5. Figures 4 and 12 depicting agricultural lands need to be revised to show the Placentia soils east and north of Gonzales as Soils of Statewide Importance. It would also be helpful to include the Soil Capability Unit of each of the soil types since LAFCO defines prime agricultural land under Government Code Section 56064 as Class I and II soil. 5-5

6. The proposed Sphere area north of Gonzales is within the 100-year floodplain. The EIR should describe more fully how the potential impact will be mitigated and evaluate the consequences of that mitigation on surrounding lands. LAFCO will need to use this information to determine consistency with its policies and justify logical growth patterns. 5-6

7. LAFCO places considerable emphasis on the capacity of public services and facilities during its consideration of Spheres of Influence. The EIR would better meet LAFCO's needs if it included more information on how the expansion of the City's public services and facilities will occur and how such expansion may relate to the Urban Service and Urban Transition designations. For example, what type of wastewater treatment plant will be constructed and will it have tertiary treatment capability and reclamation components? In what time frame will the City's fire department be converted to a paid professional and volunteer staff? The EIR should include thresholds or criteria that the City will use to determine when a service needs to be expanded. 5-7

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft document. Should you have any questions, please contact LAFCO staff at 755-5065. We look forward to receiving a copy of the Final EIR on the City's General Plan.

Sincerely,

Catherine S. West

Catherine S. West
LAFCO Senior Analyst

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LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
(LAFCO)
MONTEREY COUNTY

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE POLICIES AND CRITERIA

JANUARY 1, 1989

I. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The State Legislature has provided Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCO's) with the following directions in the preparation of spheres of influence:

1. "Among the purposes of a Local Agency Formation Commission are the discouragement of urban sprawl and the encouragement of the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances. One of the objects of the Local Agency Formation Commission is to make studies and to obtain and furnish information which will contribute to the logical and reasonable development of local governmental agencies so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of each County and its communities..."

2. "In order to carry out its purposes and responsibilities for planning and shaping the logical and orderly development and coordination of local governmental agencies so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of the County and its communities, the Local Agency Formation Commission shall develop and determine the sphere of influence of each governmental agency within the County. As used in this section, "sphere of influence" means a plan for the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local governmental agency. In determining the sphere of influence of each local governmental agency, the Commission shall consider and prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

   a. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.

   b. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

   c. The present capacity of public facilities and the adequacy of public services which the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

   d. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency."

3. Every determination made by a Commission involving proposals for changes of organization or reorganization shall be consistent with the spheres of influence of the local agencies affected by those determinations.

4. The Commission may recommend governmental reorganizations to particular agencies in the County, using spheres of influence as the basis for such recommendations."

II. DEFINITIONS

1. Agricultural Lands: Land currently used for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity for commercial purposes, land left fallow under a crop rotational program, or land enrolled in an agricultural subsidy or set-aside program (Government Code Section 56016).

2. Agricultural Preserve: Lands subject to an existing land conservation agreement established pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (the Williamson Act, Government Code Section 51200 et seq.).

3. County: Monterey County.

4. Essential Services: Those basic services necessary to protect the health, safety, and general well-being of a community, including but not limited to police, fire, water, sanitation, etc.

5. General Purpose Government: A City or County government.

6. LAFCO: Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission.

7. Local Agency: A City or special district.

8. Open Space Lands: Parcel or area of land or water which is substantially unimproved and devoted to open space use as defined in Government Code Section 65560.

9. Planning Concern Area: An area established by the Local Agency Formation Commission with the assistance of the appropriate cities and the County designating a general area of concern of a city for which planning decisions and other governmental actions of the County may have an impact on the city. A "Planning Concern Area" will usually be larger than the adopted sphere of influence boundary and may take into consideration the planning area of the city as identified within their local general plans.

10. Prime Agricultural Land: (A) Land which qualifies for rating as Class I or II in the United States Soil Conservation land-use capacity classification; (B) land which qualifies for rating 80-100 in the Storie Index Rating; (C) land which supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre; (D) land planted with fruit or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops which have a non-bearing period of less than five years and which will return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than two hundred dollars ($200) per acre for three of the previous five calendar years; (F) land which is used to maintain livestock for commercial purposes. (Government Code Section 56064).

11. Regional Agencies: Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Regional Coastal Commission, Air Pollution Control Board, etc.

12. Sphere of Influence: A plan for the probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency. The area around a local agency eligible for annexation and extension of urban service within a twenty year period.

13. Sphere of Influence Boundary: Boundary, adopted by the Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission, which delineates the limits beyond which a local governmental agency will not annex territory.

14. Urban Services: Those services which are provided to an urban area including, but not limited to, police, structural fire protection, non-agricultural water, sewer, drainage, street lighting , streets and roads.

15. Urban Service Districts: Special districts which are authorized to provide public sanitary sewer services or domestic water distribution services.

16. Urban Service Area: Urban developed areas within an urban service district or city sphere of influence, which is now served by existing urban facilities, utilities, and services or is proposed to be served by urban facilities, utilities and services within the next five years.

17. Urban Transition Area: Area within the spheres of influence boundaries of a city or an urban service district which is not programmed for urban facilities or utility extensions within the next five years. This area will most likely be used for urban expansion within approximately five to twenty years.

18. Future Study Area: Territory outside of an adopted sphere of influence that may warrant inclusion in the sphere in future years. Further study would have to be completed prior to inclusion.

19. Principal County: Principal County has the meaning contained in any definition of principal county, as set forth in the principal act. If the principal act has no definition of principal county, or if there is any inconsistency between the definitions contained in two or more applicable principal acts, principal county means the county having all or the greater portion of the entire assessed value, as shown on the last equalized assessment roll of the county or counties, of all taxable property within a district or districts for which a change of organization or reorganization is proposed.

III. POLICY GUIDELINES FOR SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

The Commission will generally apply the following policy guidelines in the spheres of influence program, in addition to the local conditions and circumstances of each local agency. The Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission will consider the particular local conditions and circumstances of each agency and community.

1. LAFCO intends that its sphere of influence determination will serve as a master plan for the future organization of local government within the County. The spheres shall be used to discourage urban sprawl; limit proliferation of local governmental agencies; encourage efficiency, economy and orderly changes in local government; promote compact, community centered urban development; and minimize adverse impacts on lands classified as prime agriculture.

2. The sphere of influence lines shall be a declaration of policy which shall be a primary guide to LAFCO in the decision on any proposal under its jurisdiction. Every determination made by the Commission shall be consistent with the spheres of influence of the agencies affected by those determinations.

3. Any proposal which is inconsistent with an agency's adopted sphere of influence shall not be approved until the Commission, at a noticed public hearing, has considered an amendment or revision to that agency's sphere of influence.

4. Inclusion within an agency's sphere of influence does not assure annexation to that agency. The Commission shall evaluate boundary change proposals as they relate to all of the relevant factors listed in the Cortese-Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 1985 (Government Code Section 56841 et seq.).

5. When possible, a single larger general purpose agency, rather than a number of adjacent smaller ones, established for a given service in the same general area will be preferred. Where an area could be assigned to the sphere of influence of more than one agency providing a particular needed service, the following hierarchy shall apply dependent upon ability to serve.

   a. Inclusion within a City sphere of influence.

   b. Inclusion within a multi-purpose district sphere of influence.

   c. Inclusion within a single-purpose district sphere of influence.

   In deciding which of two or more equally ranked agencies shall include an area within its sphere of influence, LAFCO shall consider the agencies' service and financial capabilities, social and economic interdependence, topographic factors, and the effect that eventual service extension will have on adjacent agencies.

6. Duplication of authority to perform similar functions in the same territory will be avoided. Sphere of influence boundaries shall not create islands or corridors unless it can be demonstrated that the irregular boundaries represent the most logical and orderly service area of an agency.

7. The adopted sphere of influence shall reflect City and County General Plans, plans of regional agencies, growth management policies, annexation policies, resource management policies, and any other policies related to ultimate boundary or service area of an affected agency unless those plans or policies conflict with the legislative intent of the Cortese-Knox Act of 1985 (Government Code Section 56000 et seq.).

Where inconsistencies between plans exist, LAFCO shall rely upon that plan which most closely follows the Legislature's directive to discourage urban sprawl, direct development away from prime agricultural land and open-space lands, and encourage the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances.

8. Extension of urban type services promotes urban development and such development belongs in cities or areas of development concentration in the unincorporated area of Monterey County. In evaluating proposals involving urban development requiring an urban level of governmental services, the Commission will discourage the formation of new special districts or premature annexation of territory within existing city spheres of influence or logical expansion area. The Commission will discourage boundary change proposals involving urban development outside adopted city spheres of influence that have the potential to negatively impact prime agriculture or open space lands, public service capacity, existing local governmental agencies, or generally represents illogical growth patterns.

9. This Commission, in recognition of the mandated requirements for considering impacts on open space lands and agricultural lands, will develop and determine spheres of influence for Cities and urban service districts in such a manner as to promote the long-term preservation and protection of this County's "Resources." The Commission believes the public interest will be best served by considering "Resources" in a broad sense to include open space, recreational opportunities, wildlife, and agricultural land. Sphere of influence determinations must conform with the Commission's Agricultural Preservation Policy adopted in November, 1979.

10. The Commission recognizes the many inter-relationships and impacts which one agency's land use, planning, and governmental decisions may have on other agencies even though they may be outside of the "sphere of influence" of the secondary agency. Consequently, this Commission, when necessary, will seek to establish and identify Areas of Planning Concern for each city within the County. The "Planning Concern Area" will seek to identify those areas which in a broad sense affect the city in terms of planning and land use decisions. Such "Planning Concern Areas" will be established with the assistance and guidance of the affected cities and the County. The "Planning Concern Area" normally will extend beyond the adopted "sphere of influence" of the city. Once established, the Commission will solicit the cooperation and involvement of the affected cities and the County to jointly involve one another in planning decisions for these areas.

IV. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

1. LAFCO will designate a sphere of influence for each local agency representing the agency's ultimate physical boundary within a zero to twenty year period.

2. LAFCO shall consider the following factors in determining or amending an agency's sphere of influence:

a. Present and future need for agency services and the service levels specified for the subject area in applicable general plans, growth management plans, annexation policies, resource management plans, and any other plans or policies related to an agency's ultimate boundary and service area.

b. Capability of the local agency to provide essential and urban services, taking into account evidence of resource capacity sufficient to provide for internal needs and urban expansion.

c. The existence of agricultural preserves, agricultural lands and open space lands in the area and the effect that inclusion within a sphere of influence shall have on the physical and economic integrity of maintaining the land in non-urban use.

d. Present and future cost and adequacy of services anticipated to be extended within the sphere of influence.

e. Present and projected population growth, population densities, land uses, land area, ownership patterns, assessed valuations, and proximity to other populated area.

f. The agency's capital improvement or other plans that delineate planned facility expansions and the timing of that expansion.

g. Social or economic communities of interest in the area.

3. The Commission may establish an urban service area within an adopted sphere of influence to discourage urban sprawl and to promote compact growth patterns. Urban service areas consist of territory now served by urban facilities, utilities and services or proposed to be served within the next five years, and may include the following:

   a. Urbanized Areas. This includes all existing areas, either incorporated or unincorporated, developed to urban densities.

   b. Urban Expansion Areas. This consists of vacant land, either incorporated or unincorporated, which is capable of holding urban growth expected within the next five years.

   The territory included within urban service areas will be considered by LAFCO to be eligible for annexation within five years. Consideration will be given to city and special district capability to provide needed services with related time schedules for planned expansion of services. Cities and special districts are encouraged to develop Capital Improvement Programs and other plans for the phased extension of services to assist LAFCO in determining logical urban service area boundaries.

4. The Commission may establish urban transition areas within adopted spheres of influence to discourage premature pressure for development. Transition areas consist of the residual lands between designated urban service areas and the ultimate sphere of influence boundary. This land will most likely be used for urban expansion within approximately five (5) to twenty (20) years. Territory included within urban transition areas, but not within urban service areas, generally will not be considered eligible for annexation to receive urban services within five years.

5. LAFCO may adopt a zero sphere of influence encompassing no territory for an agency. This occurs where LAFCO determines that the public service functions of the agency are either non-existent, no longer needed, or should be reallocated to some other agency of government.

   The local agency which has been assigned a zero sphere of influence should ultimately be dissolved. Special districts that lie substantially within the boundary or sphere of influence of a general purpose government which is capable of assuming the public service responsibilities and functions of that special district may be allocated a zero sphere of influence designation.

6. Territory not in need of urban services, including open space, agriculture, recreational, rural lands or residential rural areas, shall not be assigned to an agency's sphere of influence unless the area's exclusion would impede the planned, orderly and efficient development of an area.

7. LAFCO may adopt a sphere of influence that excludes territory currently within that agency's boundaries. This occurs where LAFCO determines that the territory consists of agricultural lands, open space lands or agricultural preserves whose preservation would be jeopardized by inclusion within the agency's sphere of influence. Exclusion of these areas from an agency's sphere of influence indicates that detachment is appropriate.

8. Two or more local agencies providing the same service(s) may be allocated a consolidated sphere of influence to include the areas served by both agencies. This would be the case where LAFCO believes that the particular service(s) should be provided to the entire area by a single local agency.

9. LAFCO may establish future study areas outside of adopted spheres of influence. These areas indicate territory which may ultimately be appropriate for inclusion within an agency's sphere upon future study or modified conditions.

10. LAFCO shall adopt, amend or revise sphere of influence determinations following the procedural steps set forth in the Cortese-Knox Act of 1985 (Government Code Section 56076 et seq.).

11. LAFCO shall review sphere of influence determinations every five years or when deemed necessary by the Commission. If a local agency or the County desires amendment or revision of an adopted sphere of influence, the local agency by resolution may file such a request with the Executive Officer. The request shall state the nature of the proposed amendment and the reasons for the request, include a map of the proposed amendment, and contain additional data and information as may be required by the Executive Officer.

12. The Commission encourages any private individual desiring a revision of an adopted sphere of influence to request that the affected local agency initiate sphere reconsideration by resolution to promote consultation between the parties.

13. Individuals desiring LAFCO to initiate revision or amendment of an existing sphere of influence shall file a written request with the Executive Officer. The request shall state the nature of the proposed amendment and the reasons for the request, include a map of the proposed amendment area, and contain additional data and information as may be required by the Executive Officer.

14. The Executive Officer shall review each request for amendment, prepare a report and recommendation, and place the request on the agenda of the next meeting of the Commission for which notice can be given after determining conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Copies of the Executive Officer report shall be provided to the person(s) making the request, each affected local agency, and each person who has filed a request for a report.

15. Any local agency, county, or private individual making such a request shall reimburse the Commission for the actual and direct costs incurred by the Commission. The Commission may waive such requirement if it finds that the request may be considered as part of its periodic review of spheres of influence.

16. The Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission shall adopt, amend, or revise spheres of influence after a public hearing called and held for that purpose. At least 15 days prior to the date of any such hearing, the Executive Officer shall give mailed notice of the hearing to each affected local agency and the County, and to any interested party who has filed a written request for such notice with the Executive Officer. In addition, at least 15 days prior to the date of any such hearing, the Executive Officer shall cause notice of the hearing to be published in a newspaper of general circulation which is circulated within the territory affected by the sphere of influence proposed to be adopted or amended.

    LAFCO may continue from time to time any sphere of influence hearing. At any sphere of influence hearing, LAFCO shall hear and consider oral or written testimony presented by any affected local agency, the County, or any interested person who wishes to appear.

17. On the date and time set for hearing and provided in the notice, the Commission may, without further notice, consider the amendments to a sphere of influence or set a future date for the hearing on the request.

Response to Letter 5
Catherine S. West, Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission

Response 5-1: In response to this comment, pages 17 and 41 have been revised to state that LAFCO is a responsible agency for Sphere of Influence determinations, and that the EIR is to be used for those determinations and any Planning Concern Area designation that is to be requested.

Response 5-2: The designation of portions of the proposed Sphere of Influence (SOI) as "Urban Service Areas" and "Urban Transition Areas" is a step that the City of Gonzales intends to undertake at the time that an application for a change in the SOI is submitted to LAFCO.

Response 5-3: LAFCO Sphere of Influence policies and criteria were reviewed; policies and criteria relevant to the Gonzales General Plan that were not previously described in the EIR are summarized on pages 41 and 42 of the Revised Draft EIR.

Response 5-4: The Sphere of Influence has been designated as "Proposed" on Figures 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 in the Revised Draft EIR. Textual changes have also been made throughout the Revised Draft EIR to reflect "Proposed Sphere of Influence." The General Plan's figures and text were also similarly revised.

Response 5-5: Figures 4 and 12 have been revised to show the Placentia soils east and north of Gonzales as Soils of Statewide Importance. A table of soil capability units for each of the soil types shown in Figure 12 has been added to page 71 of the Revised Draft EIR.

Response 5-6: In response to this comment, a mitigation discussion in regard to the Anderson Ranch property located to the north of the existing City limits, has been added to page 78 of the Revised Draft EIR.

Response 5-7: As stated in Response 5-2, the designation of Urban Service Areas and Urban Transition Areas will be undertaken by the City of Gonzales when an application for a change in the Sphere of Influence is submitted to LAFCO; consequently, a discussion regarding the expansion of public services and facilities in relation to the Urban Service and Urban Transition designations is not included in the Revised Draft EIR. Future wastewater treatment, including the type of wastewater treatment plant to be constructed, will be addressed at the time of SOI amendment for expansion of the treatment plant. The conversion of the City's fire department to a paid

professional and volunteer staff is addressed on page 128 of the Revised Draft EIR.

TAMC • TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

Regional Transportation Planning Agency • Congestion Management Agency • Local Transportation Commission
312 East Alisal Street, Salinas, California 93901 • (408) 755-4812 / 647-7777 / FAX (408) 755-4957

January 30, 1996

Ms. Judith Paul
Assistant Planning Director
Gonzales City Hall
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, California 93926

RE: DRAFT EIR - GONZALES GENERAL PLAN

Dear Ms. Paul:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and to provide input on the City of Gonzales General Plan update. TAMC staff has the following comments:

1994 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): The Draft EIR should be reviewed against the goals, objectives and policies of the adopted RTP and the Congestion Management Program (CMP). The related policies listed below should be considered in the Draft EIR.

- RTP Policy 1.1.1 states that "land use planning shall be coordinated with transportation planning to fully mitigate the traffic impacts of new development."
- RTP Policy 1.2.2 states that " ... Improvements must maintain or improve traffic level of service on streets and provide for alternative transportation modes". **6-1**
- RTP Objective 1.3 is to "minimize environmental impacts and conflict with existing land use patterns that could result from construction of new transportation facilities", such as the realignment of Gonzales River Road and Alta Street.

Traffic: RTP Objective 1.1 "strives to attain and maintain Level of Service (LOS) C for the roadway network in Monterey County". The impact of the proposed project on LOS standards for the CMP network, which includes Highway 101, must be assessed. If the project will result in a decline in LOS along links or at interchanges or intersections, the project must mitigate the impacts or the City will be required to prepare a Deficiency Plan and provide capital improvements. **6-2**

Traffic LOS on Highway 101 should be assessed using the Highway Capacity Manual per the CMP. New counts should be taken. They should be seven-day counts with fifteen minute drops. Average vehicle occupancy should also be collected for peak hours.

Impacts of future traffic circulation patterns, traffic volumes and levels of service, local access road system operations and safety also need to be considered.

Transit: There currently is only basic public transit service in South County. However, as recommended in RTP Policy 3.3.1, provisions for future public transit access and service should be included as part of the general plan, with specifics for bus stop turnouts and lengths, passenger shelter locations, and adequate pedestrian and transit vehicle access. Provisions for either contract or shuttle service would provide some mitigation to the increased traffic in this area. **6-3**

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities: RTP Policies (1.1.2, 1.1.3) recommend that bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be provided as part of improvements to all major roadways and shall be incorporated into the design of new developments. The Circulation Element of the Draft General Plan states (on page 111-5) that the streets are wide enough to accommodate bicycle traffic without interfering with vehicle traffic but does address the impacts of the increased vehicular traffic projected with future development and the associated conflicts with bicyclists now sharing the road. Plans for future growth and development should include a network of bikeways and pedestrian paths throughout the City to provide a viable alternative to vehicular traffic. **6-4**

Trip Reduction Program: The DEIR should be more specific in describing the policies encouraging alternatives to single passenger automobiles and propose additional trip reduction strategies so that traffic impacts to Highway 101 are minimized. One example would be a park-and-ride lot at Highway 101. **6-5**

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Draft General Plan and its EIR. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 755-5077 or Wendy Murphy at 755-4835.

Sincerely,

Joe Lopez
Transportation Planning Supervisor

cc: Nick Papadakis, AMBAG Areawide Clearinghouse

WAM:\MONITOR\GONZALGP.EIR

Response to Letter 6
Joe Lopez, Transportation Agency for Monterey County

Response 6-1: A significance criterion regarding plan consistency has been added to page 60 of the Revised Draft EIR. A section that describes the 1994 Regional Transportation Plan and Congestion Management Program in relation to the General Plan is included on page 59 of the Revised Draft EIR. An analysis of the General Plan's consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan and Congestion Management Program has been added to page 66 of the Revised Draft EIR.

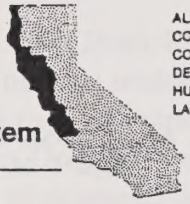
Response 6-2: The Draft EIR considers potential impacts on traffic and circulation on pages 60-65. The scope of the environmental analysis for the DEIR was developed in mid-1991 and most of the actual analysis was completed prior to the time that the 1994 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was adopted. The City of Gonzales intends for subsequent, project-specific environmental review to address traffic and circulation issues at the level of detail recommended by the RTP.

Response 6-3: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However, the comment identifying the need for provisions for future public transit access and service in the General Plan is noted.

Response 6-4: The comment regarding the need to further address the issue of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of improvements to all major roadways and new developments is noted. The City of Gonzales will consider a network of bikeways and pedestrian paths throughout the City under future plans for growth and development.

Response 6-5: A more detailed discussion describing General Plan policies that encourage alternatives to single passenger automobiles and that propose trip reduction strategies has been added to page 62 of the Revised Draft EIR.

Historical Resources Information System



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MONTEREY
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SAN MATEO
SANTA CLARA
SANTA CRUZ
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SONOMA
YOLO

Northwest Information Center
Foundation Center, Bldg. 300
Sonoma State University
1801 East Cotati Avenue
Rohnert Park, California 94928-3609
(707) 664-2494 • Fax (707) 664-3947

1 February 1996 File No.: 96-MO-6E

Judith L. Paul
City of Gonzales
PO Box 647
109 4th St.
Gonzales, CA 93926

re: City of Gonzales Draft General Plan and Draft EIR

Dear Ms. Paul:

Records at this office were reviewed to determine if this project could adversely affect historical resources. The review for possible historic structures, however, was limited to references currently in our office. The Office of Historic Preservation has determined that any building or structure 45 years or older may be of historic value. Therefore, if the project area contains such properties they should be evaluated by an architectural historian prior to commencement of project activities. Please note that use of the term historical resources includes both archaeological sites and historic structures.

____ The proposed project area contains or is adjacent to the archaeological site(s) ( ). A study is recommended prior to commencement of project activities.

____ The proposed project area has the possibility of containing unrecorded archaeological site(s). A study is recommended prior to commencement of project activities.

____ The proposed project area contains a listed historic structure ( ). See recommendations in the comments section below.

____ Study # identified one or more historical resources. The recommendations from the report are attached.

____ Study # identified no historical resources. Further study for historical resources is not recommended.

____ There is a low possibility of historical resources. Further study for historical resources is not recommended.

X Comments: After reading the above referenced document, I found that there was no indication that potential impacts to historical resources had been reviewed. The City of Gonzales is located in an environmental setting that is considered likely to contain prehistoric archaeological resources. In addition, the city contains two properties listed on the Office of Historic Preservation Historic Property Directory. Brief research also indicates the presence of other historic resources. Although no immediate impacts will occur as a result of adoption of the General Plan, projects will occur that may

7-1

adversely impact possibly important historical resources. It is recommended, therefore, that each project be reviewed at the time of application by our office to determine its specific impacts to historical resources. Thank you for your interest in protecting historical resources. 7-1

If archaeological resources are encountered during the project, work in the immediate vicinity of the finds should be halted until a qualified archaeologist has evaluated the situation. If you have any questions please give us a call (707) 664-2494.

Sincerely,

Leigh Jordan

Leigh Jordan
Coordinator

Response to Letter 7
Leigh Jordan, Historical Resources Information Systems, Northwest Information Center

Response 7-1: The Draft EIR states on page 85 that the town's site was a desirable location for prehistoric settlement. Figure 15, Existing Historic Resources, on page 87 maps historic buildings and sites in the City of Gonzales. The Draft EIR summarizes the General Plan policy that requires investigations of proposed development sites for archaeological resources on page 88. The Draft EIR also describes General Plan policies that establish a priority listing of buildings in the Historic District on page 88, and encourage preservation of historic buildings throughout the City on page 88.

CHISPA
COMMUNITY HOUSING IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS
AND PLANNING ASSOCIATION, INC.

February 21, 1996

City Council
City of Gonzales
109 Fourth Street
Gonzales, CA 93926

Ladies and Gentleman,

As advocates and developers of affordable housing, CHISPA staff has some comments about the City of Gonzales' Draft Housing Element. It does not appear to reflect the City's Goals included in the Housing Element of encouraging the development of affordable housing and providing a sufficient supply of developable land to meet the housing needs of all current and future residents. Our comments and suggestions are outlined below:

1. The 1998 Housing Goals indicate a need for 125 units affordable to very-low- and low-income households. Thirty-two of these can be provided in the California Breeze Subdivision and forty-four on the Fanoe/Fifth Street property. Pages IV 66-67 indicate a potential for additional units to be developed through rental units in single-family neighborhoods, manufactured homes, density bonuses, Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, smaller lots, Mortgage Credit Certificates, and downtown mixed use conversions. Even with these additional measures, a shortfall of 51 very-low-income units would still exist. Very-low-income households will continue to be shut out of the housing market, placing greater demand on the existing multi-family units, which the Housing Element indicates are already overcrowded and are too expensive for lower income households. To assist developers in providing affordable units, the City could provide fee waivers for developers who provide deed-restricted very-low- and low-income units. **8-1**

2. The only other vacant parcels of considerable size available for multi-family residential development, other than the Fanoe-Fifth Street site, are over a mile from the City core and will not have infrastructure available for several years. The City's population will increase significantly before those sites will be available for development, which will also place a greater demand on the existing multi-family units. To better meet the current needs of lower income residents, we suggest that the City identify additional medium-density multi-family sites (that would serve ten or more units) either within the City limits or adjacent to existing City infrastructure. **8-2**

600 East Market Street · Salinas · California · 93905 · (408) 757-6251 · Fax (408) 757-6268

3. The downtown Mixed Use area has the potential of providing additional low- and very-low-income units. However, the Housing Element indicates that the water and sewer laterals may need replacement depending on the number of units developed. This additional development expense will make affordable housing economically infeasible and disallow lower income households the opportunity for new housing. The City could provide incentives for infrastructure replacement to developers building affordable units in the Mixed-Use area. **8-3**

4. Additionally, the City could encourage developers of multi-family communities to provide amenities including, but not limited to, community centers, washer/dryer hookups in the units, children's play grounds, and picnic and recreational areas. This creates a true community that individuals, families, and children can enjoy. Recreational and educational facilities which will serve the targeted population of the development should be strongly encouraged. **8-4**

5. In addition to the site specific concerns that are addressed in the draft Housing Element, we noticed your comments regarding density bonuses for developers. It is our understanding that the State Density Bonus Law allows developers constructing communities consisting of at least 25% low-income units to receive bonuses from the jurisdiction. We request that the City adopt a plain language ordinance to facilitate a better understanding of this law for all parties. **8-5**

6. The 1990 Census Data indicates that 82.1% of Gonzales' population is of Hispanic Origin (compared to 29.7% in the County). Over 38% of its households have more than five persons, which is over twice that of the County's 16.7%. Most of the employment (40.9%) is in the Agriculture industry, which is generally a lower paying industry. This indicates to us a great need for affordable, larger units to serve Gonzales' population and ask that these facts be stressed in the final Housing Element. **8-6**

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to make these comments and to help Gonzales guide the future development of affordable housing and better serve the community and its residential needs.

Kindest Regards,

COMMUNITY HOUSING IMPROVEMENT
SYSTEMS AND PLANNING ASSOCIATION, INC.

John Prader
Senior Project Manager

Response to Letter 8
John Prader, Community Housing Improvement Systems and Planning Association, Inc.

Response 8-1: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However, the comment suggesting the implementation of fee waivers for developers who provided deed-restricted low-income units is noted.

Response 8-2: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However the comment suggesting the identification of additional medium-density multi-family sites in the General Plan is noted.

Response 8-3: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However the comment suggesting incentives for infrastructure replacement to developers building affordable units in the Mixed-Use area is noted.

Response 8-4: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However the comment suggesting the City encourage developers of multi-family communities to provide various amenities, including recreational and educational facilities, is noted.

Response 8-5: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However the comment suggesting City action with respect to the State Density Bonus Law is noted.

Response 8-6: This Response to Comments document addresses comments received on the Draft EIR. However the comment suggesting that the Housing Element of the General Plan stress the need for the development of affordable larger units in Gonzales is noted.

LOZANO SMITH
SMITH WOLIVER & BEHRENS
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

FEB 1996
City of Gonzales

February 23, 1996

By Facsimile and Mail

Carla Pew
City Manager
City of Gonzales
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926

Re: Comments of Gonzales Union High School District and Gonzales Union Elementary School District on the City of Gonzales Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Ms. Pew:

As you are aware, this firm represents Gonzales Union High School District ("High School District") and Gonzales Union Elementary School District ("Elementary School District"; collectively, "School Districts"). The School Districts have requested that we provide this response to the City's Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR").

Comments on the Text of the Draft General Plan

Initially, we note that the School Districts are extremely pleased that the General Plan and DEIR acknowledge and treat fairly the School Districts' concerns regarding overcrowding. The School Districts find extremely encouraging the City's support for adequate school facilities, and looks forward to continued cooperative efforts with the City to ensure the availability of such facilities.

9-1

It is our understanding that General Plan Policy Nos. 6.2, 6.3 and 6.7 and Implementing Actions 6.1 and 6.2 recognize the impact of new development on the School Districts' already overcrowded facilities, and support additional mitigation from developers to the extent legally permissible and justifiable by the School Districts.

Louis T. Lozano
Diana K. Smith
Michael E. Smith
Sandra Woliver
Thomas I. Riggs
Jerome M. Behrens
Christine A. Goodrich
Loren A. Carjulia
Ellen M. Jahn

Cheri D. Love
Nancy L. Klein
David J. Wolfe
Peter K. Fagen
Carmen A. Ponce
Harold M. Freiman
Samuel T. Crump
Eileen M. O'Hare
Eric E. Hill
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Fresno
Monterey

A Professional Corporation

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Monterey
California 93940
408 646-1501
Fax 408 646-1801

If this understanding is correct, the District strongly supports adoption of the Draft General Plan. If the School Districts' understanding is mistaken, they would appreciate receiving clarification in the near future, as they may then have to submit further comments on the Draft General Plan and its DEIR.

The following are some corrections that are needed in the General Plan's discussion of the condition of the School Districts in order to ensure an accurate and fair description of those conditions.

1. General Plan at VII-6, second full paragraph:

   "As a result of enrollment exceeding space additions, La Gloria Elementary School, Fairview Middle School and Gonzales High are ~~both~~ all overcrowded. As of ~~1992~~1996, La Gloria had added ~~169~~ portable classrooms ~~and was considering adding two more~~, and Fairview had added 11 portable classrooms. . . ."

2. General Plan at VII-6, third full paragraph:

   "~~The Districts do not prepare projections of future year enrollments. However, a~~A 1992 estimate by the G.U.S.D. Superintendent indicated that. . . ."

9-2

3. General Plan at VII-7, second full paragraph:

   "This Plan recommends retention of the high school, construction of a new elementary school east of Highway 101, and more efficient use of land at the existing three school campuses. The latter recommendation is based on the fact that large areas around the schools are currently used for storage and bus parking. These uses might be consolidated or relocated if feasible, creating space for building additions."

Comments on the DEIR

A. Environmental Setting/Condition of the School Districts

The DEIR's discussion of the condition of the schools is generally supported by the School Districts, although the School Districts would suggest the following minor changes to provide further clarification and to make the DEIR's description as accurate as possible:

1. DEIR at 119, second full paragraph:

   "As of 1992, the high school had approximately 1,100 students. Gonzales High School is presently ~~very close to~~ over capacity."

   9-3

2. DEIR at 119, last full paragraph:

   "The districts ~~do not~~ project enrollments for future years. The District can predict the number of students from the permanent year-round population. ~~However,~~Although each year workers come to Gonzales to work in the agricultural industry~~,~~, and some workers bring families while others do not, the Districts are nevertheless able generally to predict future enrollments based on past experience. Historically, the Districts' enrollment projects have proven to be very close to actual enrollment. ~~Thus, even knowing how many workers the industry needs does not indicate how many children will come.~~"

   9-4

The change in this second paragraph is intended to reflect the fact that the Districts do make enrollment projections that, historically, have proven to be fairly close to enrollments actually experienced. The DEIR's current statement that no such projects are made or are possible are factually incorrect.

B. Description of Impact

The School Districts strongly support what they perceive to be the spirit of the DEIR. At the same time, however, they do have several concerns regarding the clarity of specific language in the DEIR concerning there is or is not an impact on schools, and further, whether any mitigation is required to address those impacts.

It is our understanding that the only reason there is no explicit finding of an impact on schools in the DEIR is that the General Plan includes policies which, once implemented, would reduce any impact to a level of less-than-significant. The School Districts have no objection to this approach per se, but feel that the language of the discussion of schools appearing at page 125 of the DEIR could be revised to make this finding unambiguous. As such, we would propose that the second paragraph of page 125 be revised as follows:

> This significant rise in school enrollment in the City could have a significant impact on schools due to the lack of adequate capacity at existing school sites. However, ~~if~~ compliance with the policies in the Community Facilities and Services Element and the Land Use Elements ~~are adopted as proposed,~~ can and will ensure that the General Plan would not have a significant impact on Gonzales' schools. To the extent that there is a significant impact on schools, such policies will be enforced so as to provide sufficient mitigation to render the impact less-than-significant. Policy 6.6 of the Community Facilities and Services Element and Policy 10.3 of the Land Use Element recommend a second elementary school to serve new development areas east of Highway 101. The City should consider requiring a site dedication as a condition of development approval in the area south of the C Street extension and east of Highway 101. Community Facilities and Services Policy 6.3 requires new development to contribute funds to both the Elementary School District and the High School District for the acquisition of land and/or school facilities which would be necessary to accommodate students from such development.

9-5

The foregoing recommendations are minor changes, intended only for clarification, and we feel that no recirculation of the DEIR would be required for these changes to be incorporated. In the unlikely event that the Draft General Plan is altered so that the policies discussed herein will no longer be in place, the School Districts would request the opportunity to provide further input regarding the DEIR's findings, as there would then be a serious potential for unmitigated significant impact on schools.

Conclusion

Again, the School Districts commend the City for the supportive position it has taken regarding schools in its Draft General Plan and DEIR. If the City is aware of any misunderstandings regarding that position that have been expressed in this letter, we would appreciate your contacting us so that we can provide such further comments as may be necessary.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments. The School Districts look forward to their continued partnership with the City of Gonzales, and welcome the chance to work with the City to ensure the availability of quality schools to serve the growing populace of Gonzales.

Sincerely,

LOZANO SMITH
SMITH WOLIVER & BEHRENS

Harold M. Freiman

HMF:hf

cc: Dr. William Stratton, Gonzales Union H.S.D.
Gordon Piffero, Gonzales Union E.S.D.
Judith Paul, Assistant Planning Director
Mike Rodriguez, Esq.

gonzhigh\gp.ltr

Response to Letter 9
Harold Freiman, Lozano Smith, Smith Woliver & Behrens

Response 9-1: The comments regarding the School Districts' support for the Gonzales General Plan are noted.

Response 9-2: The recommended revisions have been made to the General Plan.

Response 9-3: The recommended revision has been made on page 123 of the Revised Draft EIR.

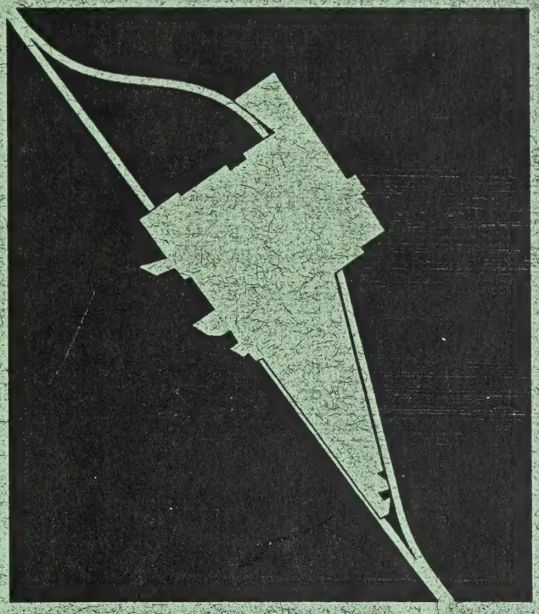
Response 9-4: The comments regarding the School Districts' ability to project school enrollments are noted and the recommended revision has been made on page 123 of the Revised Draft EIR.

Response 9-5: The comment regarding the need to clarify specific language in the DEIR concerning the finding of a less than significant impact on schools is appreciated and noted. The following revision to the paragraph in question has been incorporated into page 129 the Revised Draft EIR:

> A significant rise in school enrollment in the city could have a significant impact on schools as a result of the lack of adequate capacity for new students at existing school sites. However, ~~if~~ implementation of the policies in the Community Facilities and Services Element and the Land Use Elements ~~are adopted as proposed,~~ will serve to mitigate school-related impacts associated with the General Plan ~~would not have a significant impact on Gonzales' schools.~~ Policy 6.6 of the Community Facilities and Services Element and Policy 10.3 of the Land Use Element recommend a second elementary school to serve new development areas east of Highway 101. The City should consider requiring a site dedication as a condition of development approval in the area south of the C Street extension and east of Highway 101. Community Facilities and Services Policy 6.3 requires new development to contribute funds to both the elementary School District and the High School District for the acquisition of land and/or school facilities which would be necessary to accommodate students from such development. The City shall attempt to enforce such policies in accordance with applicable law so as to provide sufficient mitigation to render impacts less-than-significant. In instances in which the City determines that such impacts cannot or should not be fully mitigated, adoption of an appropriate statement of overriding considerations will be required.

REVISED DRAFT

GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



SUBMITTED TO THE
CITY OF GONZALES

JULY 1996

INCORPORATES REVISIONS IDENTIFIED
IN THE FINAL EIR

BRADY AND ASSOCIATES, INC. PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

PROJECT DATA

■ ■ ■

PROJECT NAME:	Gonzales General Plan Update
PROJECT LOCATION:	City of Gonzales in Monterey County
PROPOSED ACTION:	Adoption of a General Plan Update
POLICY AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:	The Plan includes seven elements: 1) Land Use; 2) Circulation; 3) Housing; 4) Community Health and Safety; 5) Environmental Resources and Conservation; 6) Community Facilities and Services; and 7) Community Character.
TIME HORIZON:	2015
ACTION ASSESSED:	Designates 549 acres for development, including 535 acres of agricultural land. Development Potential: • 1,580 new dwelling units and approximately 6,116 residents; • 312,015 additional commercial square feet; • 4,203,540 additional industrial square feet; • 2,973 total dwelling units; 11,578 total population; 5,795 total employment. Establishes nine land use designations and a historic overlay district. Extends services and expands the waste treatment plant land area. Establishes new streets and reroutes existing roads.
ALTERNATIVE 1:	No Development. 2015 Population: No change. Existing conditions.
ALTERNATIVE 2:	No Project/Limited Development. 2015 Population: about 7,400. Would allow development on existing 28 vacant acres. Would prohibit annexations of adjacent farmlands for development.
ALTERNATIVE 3:	Residential Community. 2015 Population: 10,000 - 12,000. 1,686 new residential units on 470 acres. Would designate 624 acres for development, including 610 acres of agricultural land.
ALTERNATIVE 4:	Commercial Center. 2015 Population: 9,000 - 10,000. 1,241 new residential units on 230 acres. Would designate 525 acres for development, including 511 acres of agricultural land.
ALTERNATIVE 5:	Agricultural Center. 2015 Population: 8,000 - 9,000. 776 new residential units on 148 acres. Would designate 502 acres for development, including 478 acres of agricultural land.

GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

SUBMITTED TO THE
CITY OF GONZALES

JULY 1996

PREPARED BY
BRADY AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
BARRY MILLER, PLANNING CONSULTANT
CRANE TRANSPORTATION GROUP
ILLINGWORTH & RODKIN

Gonzales General Plan Draft EIR
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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

■ ■ ■

A. Purpose of the EIR

In fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the environmental consequences of the Gonzales General Plan Update. The EIR assumes full realization of the General Plan's land use and circulation policies, as well as eventual annexation and development of all the land shown within the proposed sphere of influence. It is an informational document, intended to inform decision-makers, responsible agencies, and the public at large of the proposed action, potential environmental consequences of Plan approval, and alternatives to the proposed action.

This EIR is a Program EIR. The CEQA Guidelines state that a Program EIR may be prepared for a series of actions that are related "in connection with issuance of rules, regulation, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program." This Program EIR identifies general effects of the proposed City of Gonzales General Plan. It is assumed that individual projects in the General Plan area would receive detailed environmental evaluation, as necessary, during specific project review.

B. Background and Purpose of the Project

The City of Gonzales is located in Monterey County in the central part of the Salinas Valley. The City is located 16 miles south of Salinas and 33 miles north of King City (see Figure 1). The cities of San Jose and San Francisco lie to the north at distances of 70 miles and 120 miles, respectively.

The majority of Gonzales is confined between the Southern Pacific railroad tracks and U.S. Highway 101. The Southern Pacific railroad tracks define the western boundary of the City, although some agricultural industry is located further beyond the tracks. The Highway 101 freeway defines part of the eastern City boundary, although recent development east of the freeway and

north of Fifth Street has pushed that boundary out to Fanoe Road. Beyond the City limits, Gonzales is surrounded by highly productive agricultural lands.

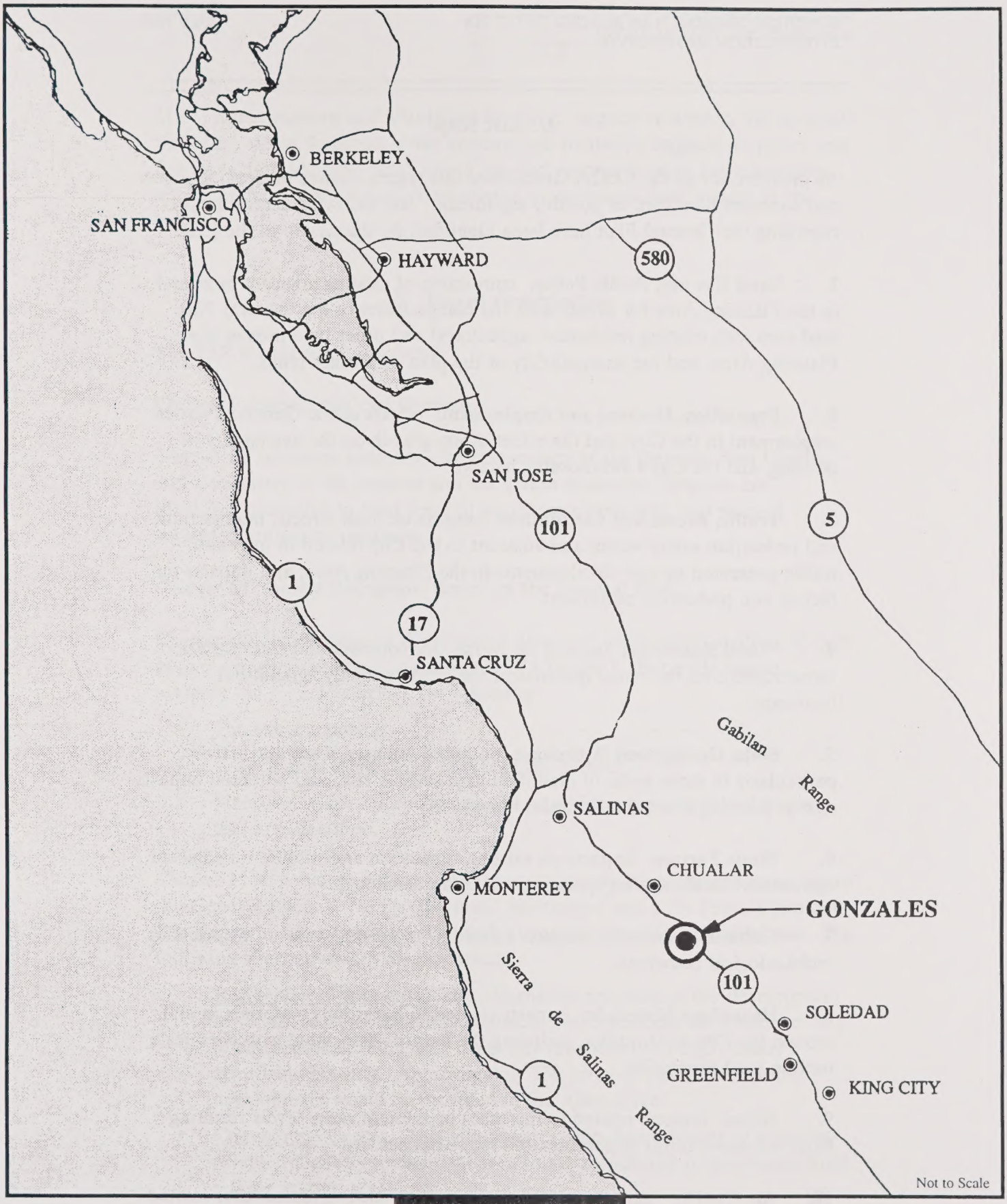
The City of Gonzales was incorporated in 1947. A General Plan was adopted by the City Council in 1963. Elements were added to the Plan in the 1970s and the Housing, Circulation and Land Use Elements of the Plan were updated in 1981. In 1980, the City's population was 2,891 and covered approximately 450 acres. By the late 1980s, requests for annexations and development approvals were increasing in areas the General Plan had not anticipated would be developed. In 1991, the City Council decided to update its General Plan to address the City's changing needs.

The General Plan provides broad guidelines for development in the Planning Area rather than site specific, detailed instructions on how and where to build. The Plan includes maps that generally show where future development should be allowed and where roads and public facilities should be improved. The Plan also provides guidance in the management of natural resources, and the preservation of open space and the provision of recreational areas. It includes provisions to protect the public from health and safety hazards such as flooding, earthquakes, and excessive noise. General Plan discussions on housing state ways to make housing more affordable and available to a wider segment of the population. The horizon year for the General Plan is 2015.

C. Planning Process

Early in the planning process, the City Council, Planning Commission, and staff outlined a set of priorities and goals they wished the General Plan to accomplish. At the same time, a Citizens Advisory Committee was designated that also described its vision of the future.

The first step in the planning process was to collect information about the existing conditions in Gonzales. This information provided a basis for determining what direction the City wished to take in the future as well as to ensure that the General Plan is based on accurate, reliable information. Next, a set of preliminary goals were formulated. The goals were used as a framework for developing and evaluating alternative land use, circulation, and infrastructure plans. Based on these goals, three alternative concept plans were developed. Each alternative was assessed and a preferred alternative was selected. The General Plan, which this EIR assesses, is based on this preferred land use alternative.



GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FIGURE 1
Regional Location

D. EIR Scope

As provided for in the CEQA Guidelines, this report focuses on specific issues and concerns identified as possibly significant. The following central issues regarding the General Plan have been identified for discussion in the EIR.

1. **Land Use and Public Policy:** conversion of existing adjacent farmland in the Planning Area for urban uses; the compatibility of the General Plan land uses with existing residential, agricultural and other land uses in the Planning Area; and the compatibility of the plan with other plans.

2. **Population, Housing and Employment:** effects of the General Plan on employment in the City; and the effect of job growth on the availability of housing, and the City's jobs/housing balance.

3. **Traffic, Access and Circulation:** impacts on local streets, intersections and pedestrian safety within and adjacent to the City related to increased traffic generated by new developments in the Planning Area; and impacts on bicycle and pedestrian movement.

4. **Visual Resources:** impacts of overall development and transportation infrastructure on the visual qualities of the predominantly agricultural landscape.

5. **Soils, Geology and Hydrology:** potential impacts of seismic activity, particularly in those areas of identified high seismic risk; and potential impacts due to flooding along the Gonzales Slough.

6. **Biotic Factors:** impacts on existing vegetation and wildlife on adjacent agricultural lands, and on species along Gonzales Slough.

7. **Cultural Resources:** impacts related to the disturbance of historic and archaeological resources.

8. **Hazardous Materials:** impacts related to hazardous materials in and around the City of Gonzales, including the hazards associated with chemicals used in food processing.

9. **Noise:** impacts related to increases in ambient noise levels resulting from increased traffic generation and industrial activity.

10. **Air Quality:** impacts related to air quality, such as agricultural-related dust, and automobile and industrial emissions.

11. Infrastructure and Municipal Services: impacts related to the demand for water, storm drainage, sewer systems and roadways; impacts on police and fire protection services; provision of gas and electric service; and cumulative effects on local schools and parks related to increased development in the area.

E. Report Organization

The EIR is organized as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction and Overview.

Chapter II: Summary, presents a brief summary of the General Plan Update and a summary of the impacts and mitigation measures. Impacts are identified according to their level of significance both with and without suggested mitigation measures.

Chapter III: Project Description, describes the General Plan.

Chapter IV: Setting, Impacts & Mitigation Measures, contains an analysis of each impact category described in Section D of Chapter I. For each impact category the report describes the following:

- The existing setting.
- A discussion of potential effects of the project.
- Measures which are recommended to mitigate any significant impacts that are identified.

Chapter V: Alternatives Analysis, identifies alternative development scenarios to the General Plan. A No Development Alternative and a No Project/Limited Development Alternative are included, as required by CEQA Guidelines. The following alternatives are also included:

- Residential Community. This alternative emphasizes the development of Gonzales as a residential community and provides for a wide variety of residential development from very low density to high density affordable housing. Approximately 330 acres of mixed residential development would be provided in this alternative.
- Commercial Center. This alternative allows development of a tourist-oriented highway commercial area to attract tourists or customers from a large market area.

- Agricultural Center. With this alternative, Gonzales would develop as an agricultural center. A significant amount of land west of Alta Street would be set aside for development of industry serving agricultural uses.

Chapter VI: CEQA Required Discussions, contains the required CEQA discussions regarding growth inducement, irreversible impacts, and cumulative impacts.

Chapter VII: References, contains a bibliography of all references used in the preparation of the EIR.

The EIR also contains appendix material referenced in the text of the document.

F. Mitigation Monitoring

In compliance with State law, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program will be prepared by the City and adopted for the General Plan to ensure successful implementation of the required mitigation. The mitigation monitoring program is intended to ensure compliance during implementation of the General Plan. The mitigation monitoring program will summarize mitigation measures, specify monitoring and reporting actions, and identify implementing responsibilities.

Chapter II
SUMMARY

■ ■ ■

This Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared to evaluate the environmental impacts of the Gonzales General Plan.

The General Plan consists of a Land Use Diagram together with text, including goals, policies, and action programs to guide future development in the City of Gonzales Planning Area. The General Plan is summarized in Chapter III, Project Description, of this report.

This EIR examines the potential significant adverse and cumulative impacts of implementation of the General Plan. This EIR is a self-mitigating EIR, in which the policies of the General Plan provide an internal mitigation within the document itself.

This chapter provides an overview of the analysis contained in Chapter IV, Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures, and Chapter V, Alternatives Analysis. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require that a summary include discussions of potential areas of controversy, significant impacts and mitigation measures, whether or how to mitigate any significant effects, and issues to be resolved such as choosing between project and alternatives.

A. Potential Areas of Controversy

The potential areas of controversy surrounding the General Plan were raised by either members of the community or representatives of various agencies. They include:

- the conversion of prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance;
- the violation of air quality standards and the Air Quality Management Plan;

- the contribution to the existing overdraft problem of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin;
- the increase in traffic and subsequent increase in noise volumes;
- the loss of the Gonzales' small-town character and the potential division of an East and West Gonzales (divided by Highway 101);
- the effect on visual resources including the adjacent farmlands and distant mountain ranges to the east and west;
- the incompatibility of adjacent future land uses such as new low density residential and farmlands; and
- the provision of adequate and affordable housing for current and future Gonzales residents.

B. Significant Impacts

Under CEQA, a significant effect on the environment is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment. This includes any of the physical conditions within the Planning Area affected by the General Plan such as land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. CEQA requires an in-depth analysis of those environmental factors that are identified as having a potential to be adversely affected by the General Plan.

The General Plan would result in a significant impact on circulation. Under buildout conditions of the proposed Plan, a segment of Fifth Street between Rincon Road and the Highway 101 interchange would violate the City's level of service standards. This impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level if the proposed mitigation measures are adopted.

C. Significant Unavoidable Impacts

The General Plan would also result in significant impacts that, even with mitigation measures, would not be mitigated to less than significant levels. These impacts are identified as significant and unavoidable. The General Plan would have significant unavoidable impacts on land use, soils, air, and municipal services.

Development under the General Plan would cause significant unavoidable impacts to prime farmland and farmland of statewide significance, as classified

by the USDA Soil Conservation Service.[1] The land to the west of Gonzales is generally better for agricultural production due to its good water retention characteristics and higher sand content. The land east of the City is also good, but contains more clay, thereby using and absorbing more water. To accommodate the General Plan's population buildout projections, the City has no alternative but to develop on these agricultural soils. Although the Plan guides residential development east, avoiding the prime soils west of the City, conversion of agricultural land would still occur. Thus, the significant impacts on prime farmland through the General Plan are unavoidable. This impact is discussed further in Chapter IV, Section A, Land Use and Public Policy, and Section E, Soils, Geology and Hydrology, of this document.

The General Plan would also cause a significant unavoidable impact on air quality. The Plan is not consistent with the 1991 Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The population projected in the General Plan exceeds population projection figures used as a basis for the AQMP. Because the projected population would be greater, more air pollution would result from traffic and construction than anticipated by the AQMP. Consequently, targets to control air pollution will be exceeded and mitigation measures will not be adequate to offset air quality impacts. This impact is discussed further in Chapter IV, Section, Air Quality.

The General Plan would also cause a significant unavoidable impact on water supply (Chapter IV, Section K, Infrastructure and Municipal Services). To accommodate population growth of the General Plan, the City would be required to build additional wells and withdraw more water from the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. The basin is currently suffering from an overdraft of its groundwater supply. Mitigation measures include the implementation of several water conservation ordinances by the County and City. However, these measures will be insufficient to prevent the increase in water supply demand that growth under the General Plan would require. This impact on water supply and the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin is therefore significant and unavoidable.

D. Statement of Overriding Considerations

CEQA allows the City of Gonzales to approve a plan with unavoidable significant impacts if it makes a finding, known as a *Statement of Overriding*

[1] The USDA classifies soils and farmlands under the same categories of importance.

Considerations, stating that the benefits of a project outweigh its unavoidable adverse environmental effects.

E. Alternatives to the Project

The following alternatives to the Plan are analyzed in Chapter V, Alternatives Analysis, of this report:

- Alternative 1: No Development
- Alternative 2: No Project/Limited Development
- Alternative 3: Residential Community
- Alternative 4: Commercial Center
- Alternative 5: Agricultural Center

The Alternatives Analysis chapter identifies the No Project/Limited Development Alternative as the Environmentally Superior Alternative. The No Project/Limited Development Alternative would limit future development to land within the existing City limits and prohibit the annexation of land beyond City limits.

With the exception of the No Project/Limited Development Alternative, none of the alternatives would avoid the significant and significant unavoidable impacts that are identified in the previous section. All of the alternatives would allow development on farmland beyond the existing City limits. Growth under these alternatives would subsequently cause a significant air quality impact. However, the three land use alternatives (Residential Community, Commercial Center, and Agricultural Center) would have fewer impacts because they designate less agricultural land for future urban uses.

F. Issues To Be Resolved

One issue remains to be resolved upon adoption of the General Plan. To mitigate the circulation impact along the Fifth Street segment, the City should decide whether to implement one or both of the proposed mitigation measures. This circulation impact and the mitigation measures are included in the following Summary Table and in the Circulation section of Chapter IV, Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures.

G. Summary Table

Table 1 summarizes Impacts and Mitigation Measures of the General Plan of the City of Gonzales. This information corresponds with the environmental issues discussed in Chapter IV. The table is arranged in four columns: (1) Environmental Impacts, (2) Mitigation Measures, (3) Level of Significance Before Mitigation, and (4) Level of Significance After Mitigation. For a complete description of potential impacts and recommended mitigation measures, please refer to the specific issue section in Chapter IV.

Table 1
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
GENERAL PLAN OF THE CITY OF GONZALES

Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Significance After Mitigation
LAND USE AND PUBLIC POLICY			
LU-1. The General Plan would allow for the conversion of 535 acres of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.	LU-1. Adopt and implement General Plan policies and action programs that attempt to limit the conversion of prime agricultural land for urban uses.	S	SU
POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT			
No significant population, housing and employment impacts have been identified.			
TRAFFIC, ACCESS AND CIRCULATION			
TRA-1. The Level of Service (LOS) along Fifth Street from Rincon Road to Highway 101 would deteriorate to LOS D due to increased traffic generated by the General Plan development.	TRA-1a. Prohibit parking on Fifth Street east of the Gonzales Union High School during the PM peak hour on weekdays to facilitate the flow of traffic along Fifth Street. and/or TRA-1b. Encourage the use of the proposed C Street overpass as an alternate route to Highway 101 and residences east of Highway 101 for traffic driving to and from Alta Street by implementing measures such as installing two stop signs along C Street.	S	LS
VISUAL RESOURCES			
No significant visual impacts have been identified.			
SOILS, GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY			
No significant soils, geology and hydrology impacts have been identified.			

LS = Less Than Significant S = Significant SU = Significant Unavoidable

Table 1 *continued*

Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Significance After Mitigation
BIOTIC FACTORS			
No significant biotic factors impacts have been identified.			
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
No significant cultural resources impacts have been identified.			
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
No significant hazardous materials impacts have been identified.			
NOISE			
No significant noise impacts have been identified.			
AIR QUALITY			
AIR-1. Increased transportation and industrial emissions would contribute to the region's existing violation of air quality standards and discourage industries with high emissions such as power plants, refineries, chemical plants, and mills. Any increase in planned development would therefore lead to inconsistency with the MBUAPCD Air Quality Management Plan, and contribute to the region's existing exceedance of air quality standards.	AIR-1. Adopt and implement General Plan policies and action programs that would reduce emissions from automobiles, industries, and construction-related activities.	S	SU

LS = Less Than Significant S = Significant SU = Significant Unavoidable

Table 1 *continued*

Environmental Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Significance After Mitigation
INFRASTRUCTURE AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES			
INFRA-1. The General Plan would interfere substantially with recharge of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin.	INFRA-1a. Fully implement the ordinances of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (described in the Existing Settings, Water Policy section). INFRA-1b. Adopt and implement General Plan policies and Ordinance No. 493 which address water conservation measures.	S	SU

LS = Less Than Significant S = Significant SU = Significant Unavoidable

Chapter III
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

■ ■ ■

The following summary of the Gonzales General Plan is provided as an aid in review of the Program EIR. Please refer to the General Plan document for the specific wording of goals, policies and action programs.

A. Planning Area Description

1. Regional Setting

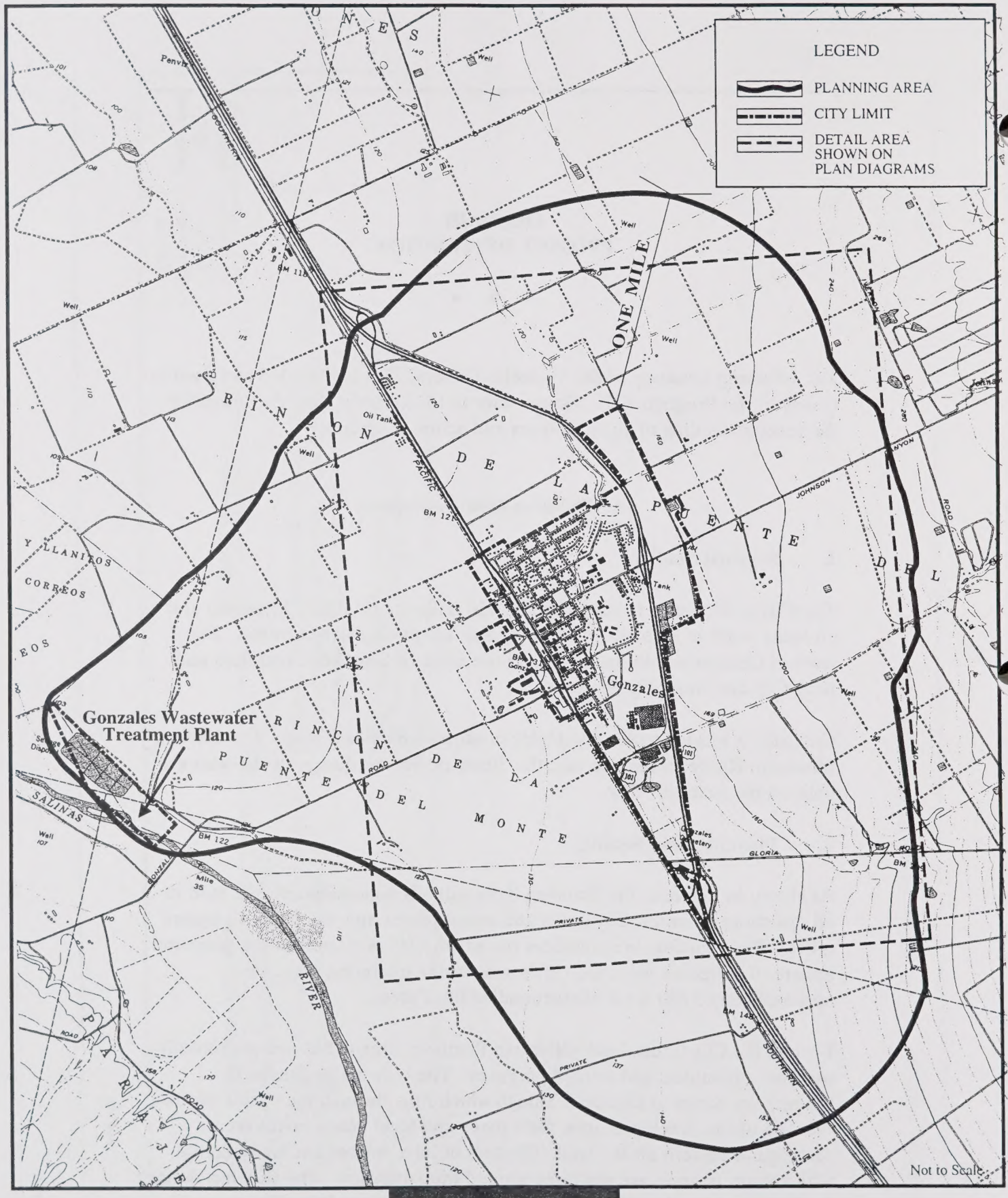
The City of Gonzales is located about 120 miles south of San Francisco and 16 miles south of Salinas on U.S. Highway 101 in Monterey County. The town of Chualar lies to the north and the cities of Soledad, Greenfield and King City are located to the south.

Gonzales is located within the highly productive Salinas Valley. The Gabilan Mountain Range to the east and the Sierra de Salinas Range to the west are both visible from the City.

2. Planning Area Setting

As shown in Figure 2, the Planning Area extends approximately one mile in all directions from the City limits and encompasses approximately 11 square miles. The Planning Area includes the entire City of Gonzales, the proposed Sphere of Influence area, the City's wastewater treatment plant, and approximately 5,800 acres of surrounding farm areas.

Beyond the City limits, land within the Planning Area is flat and is primarily used for agriculture and related purposes. The only major change in topography occurs at Gonzales Slough which runs through the center of town. Outside of the developed area, field roads and local access roads create a rectangular pattern on the land. Clusters of farm houses and outbuildings with clumps of trees are scattered around the landscape. The City has defined its Planning Area broadly to convey its position that land that is not



NORTH

SOURCE: U.S.G.S. 1994; City of Gonzales, 1994.

GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FIGURE 2
Gonzales Planning Area

designated for development in the General Plan should remain in agricultural use. Specific policies to this effect are included in the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

3. Sphere of Influence

The proposed Sphere of Influence is shown in Figure 3, the Land Use Diagram. The proposed sphere of influence extends beyond the existing City limits primarily to the east of Highway 101 and south of 5th street. Approximately 549 total acres of developable land are included in the proposed sphere of influence, which includes the City's wastewater treatment to the west. This area could be built out under the General Plan by 2015, the end of the planning period. The proposed sphere of influence would allow for future annexation to accommodate growth under the General Plan. The Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) is the responsible agency for all Sphere of Influence determinations. This EIR is intended to be used for those determinations and any Planning Concern Area designation that is to be requested by the City of Gonzales.

4. City of Gonzales Setting

The majority of the City is located between Highway 101 to the east and the Southern Pacific mainline railroad tracks to the west. The City currently occupies over half of the lens-shaped area between these two major transportation routes. Prior to the 1980s, development had remained largely within the boundaries created by the highway and the railroad. Development has since been extended beyond these boundaries. Currently, a residential and commercial area exists on the east side of the highway while industrial development has occurred to the west of the railroad tracks.

The northern and southern interchanges where Highway 101 and Alta Street converge are the major access points to and from the City along Highway 101. Alta Street serves as a major north-south transportation route for residents and truck drivers. Leaving the highway from the north, Alta Street leads through agricultural lands as a two land road. After one mile, it splits to form a four-lane divided roadway with a row of trees in the median. Alta Street continues southward through Gonzales to rejoin Highway 101 at the southern City limits. In addition to serving as a major north-south transportation route, Alta Street provides access to the City's downtown commercial shopping area and is used as a truck parking area for the industries to the west.

Fifth Street, the only road which crosses the entire City in an east-west direction, also provides access to and from Highway 101 and Alta Street.

Fifth Street is located one block north of the commercial downtown core of the City and leads through residential neighborhoods, schools and Central Park. Collector streets in the City include Day Street, Elko Street, Fanoe Road, 1st Street, Fairview Drive, Rincon Road, 4th Street, 7th Street, C Street and Centennial Drive.

Three public schools, Gonzales Union High School, Fairview Middle School, and La Gloria School, are located in the center of the developed area of the City. The schools form a focal point to the community and create a large open space area which is bisected by Gonzales Slough. The original town, west of the schools, is laid out in a rectangular pattern. East of the schools and across Highway 101, the newer subdivisions are laid out in a more curvilinear fashion.

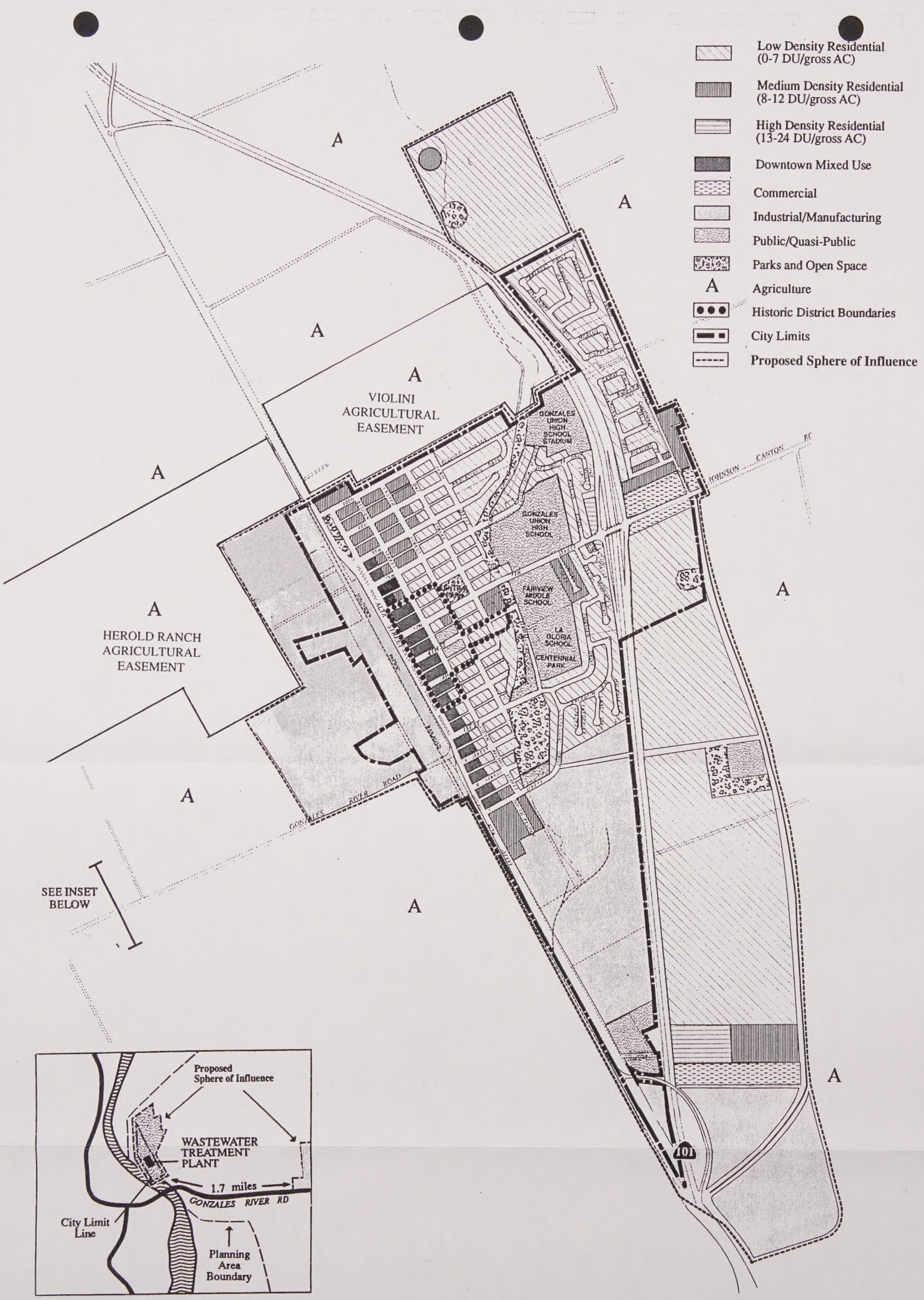
B. The Gonzales General Plan

The proposed project consists of an update of the existing 1981 General Plan. The General Plan is comprised of seven Elements including the Land Use, Housing, and Circulation Elements. A Community Health and Safety Element focuses on natural hazards, police and fire protection, hazardous materials, noise, air and water quality. The Environmental Resource and Conservation Element addresses vegetation and wildlife, agricultural preservation, soil resources, water resources and open space. A Community Facilities and Services Element is included in the Plan to address water, sewer, drainage, solid waste, school, and library services. The Community Character Element addresses historical preservation, urban design and visual quality.

The General Plan also contains an optional Implementation Chapter at the end of the document.[1] The Implementation Chapter summarizes the proposed Plan's action programs, and also serves as a reference for City staff and decision-makers carrying out the Plan. For the general public, this chapter serves as a summary of the activities that the City of Gonzales will undertake within the next few years upon the Plan's adoption. For a detailed discussion of the major types of actions to be undertaken by the City, the Implementation Chapter should be referenced.

Under the General Plan, the population of Gonzales is projected to almost double at buildout in 2015, resulting in approximately 1,580 new housing units and 4,850 new jobs. The percentage of employed persons who live and work

[1] The Implementation Chapter is not a required component of General Plans.



WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT INSET

NORTH

SCALE IN FEET

0' 300' 600' 1200' 2400'

GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FIGURE 3
Land Use Diagram

BRADY AND ASSOCIATES
PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

in Gonzales is projected to rise from 31 percent to 40 percent at buildout with the majority of the other 60 percent of the workforce commuting to jobs north of the City. Traffic volumes would increase at major intersections and along Highway 101.

Following is a summary of each General Plan Element.

1. Land Use Element

The Land Use Element identifies issues, goals and policies that will guide land use decisions for the City through the life of the General Plan. According to Government Code Section 65302(a), the Land Use Element should designate the general distribution, location, and extent of land used for housing, business, industry, open space, and public and municipal services. Land Use policies address issues such as conservation of residential neighborhoods, urban expansion, economic development, maintenance of a healthy downtown, and the creation of new neighborhoods.

a. Land Use Diagram. The Land Use Element includes a Land Use Diagram, as shown in Figure 3. The diagram shows urban land use designations within the City's proposed sphere of influence to accommodate anticipated growth to the year 2015. An Agriculture designation for lands not anticipated for urban growth in the Planning Area is also shown on the Land Use Diagram.

Following are brief descriptions of each land use category:

- **Low Density Residential:** *7 or less dwelling units per gross acre*[2]
  This designation applies in areas that are appropriate for relatively low densities of urban development. The majority of the residential areas east of the Downtown and east of Highway 101 fall under this designation. A total of 429 acres have been designed Low Density Residential in the Planning Area, including 252 acres of undeveloped land and 177 acres of developed land.
- **Medium Density Residential:** *8 to 12 dwelling units per gross acre*
  This designation applies to areas of development that are appropriate for residential densities with 8 to 12 units per acre. These areas are close to the downtown, including clusters along Gabilan Court and east of Highway 101. A total of 47 acres have been designated Medium

[2] "Gross" acreage includes streets, easements, utilities, flood control ditches, and other areas which are owned publicly or in common by several parties.

Density Residential, including 17 acres of undeveloped land and 30 acres of developed land.

- **High Density Residential:** *13 to 24 dwelling units per gross acre*
  This designation applies to areas of development that are appropriate for high density residential uses. A total of 10 acres have been designated High Density Residential, including 8 acres of undeveloped land and 2 acres of developed land. Land designated as High Density Residential could provide much needed housing for low to moderate income groups and agricultural workers.

- **Downtown Mixed Use:** *Maximum 1.5 Floor Area Ratio (FAR)*[3]
  This designation applies to the downtown areas along the north side of Alta Street and the south side of Belden Street. This designation allows for typical one- and two- story buildings that come to the sidewalk without front or side setbacks. Retail, restaurant, office, and multi-family residential uses would be allowed, but new single-family residences would not be allowed. This designation has been applied to 18 acres primarily encompassing the existing blocks along Alta Street between Eighth Street and C Street. While most of this area is already developed, much of it is underutilized and could be used more intensely.

- **Commercial:** *Maximum 0.5 FAR*
  This designation allows for the development of retail sales, shopping centers, grocery stores, restaurants, gas stations, hotels, and other uses that will meet local and regional needs for goods and services. This designation is intended primarily for service and retail uses whose operational needs and characteristics are considered inappropriate for the downtown area. This designation has been applied to 21 acres, including 7 acres of developed land such as the existing shopping centers on Fifth Street east of Highway 101, and 14 acres of undeveloped land such as the vacant land along Gloria Road southeast of the existing City limits.

- **Industrial/Manufacturing:** *Maximum 0.5 FAR*
  This designation allows for industrial and manufacturing uses. Emphasis is put on agricultural industry and services, stressing the development of Gonzales as an agricultural center. The existing agricultural industrial area to the west of Alta Street and the railroad tracks is extended to the south and west. This area is separate from the downtown, but still close to the area so that workers can use the

[3] Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the gross floor area of structures on a site divided by the gross site area.

downtown restaurants, stores, and delis. A total of 325 acres have been designated for industrial uses, including 132 acres of developed land and 193 acres of undeveloped land.

- **Public/Quasi-Public:** This designation is applied to public and private lands including governmental buildings, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, cemeteries and other structures that serve public needs. The designation would apply to 135 acres in the City, including 78 acres of developed land and 57 acres of undeveloped land. The undeveloped land includes a 50-acre site reserved for future expansion of the wastewater treatment plant located approximately 1.7 miles east of the City, a site for a community center in a new residential area south of California Breeze, and a small expansion area for the Gonzales Cemetery.
- **Parks and Open Space:** This designation would accommodate park, recreation and open space uses. Under the General Plan, there would be 27 acres of parks and open space, including Gonzales Slough. Other lands with this designation include Centennial Park, Central Park, the undeveloped lands along the Gonzales Slough, and Meyer Park which is currently under construction.
- **Agriculture:** This designation applies to more than 5,800 acres within the Planning Area with a maximum allowable density of one residential unit per 40 acres. The primary function of this designation is to promote the long-term conservation of land in agricultural use around Gonzales. It is the City's only non-urban designation, and extends beyond the area shown in Figure 3 to the edge of the Planning Area, shown in its entirety in Figure 2.
- **Historic District:** The Historic District is an "overlay" land use designation which applies to about eight blocks, primarily in the downtown area of Gonzales.[4] The district includes structures important in the City's history, and protects those buildings from demolition or modification which would adversely affect their historical value. The Historic District includes the Parson Home, the Widemann Home, Sneible and Tavernetti building, the Wells Fargo Bank, the Albina Brusa House, and the Boekenoogan House.

Major revisions to the 1981 General Plan land use diagram include the addition of 252 acres of new Low Density Residential lands and the addition of 193 acres of Industrial/ Manufacturing lands west of the railroad tracks. A

[4] The Historic District "overlay" designation will permit land uses according to the base land designations.

new High Density Residential designation is also included in the General Plan, and the Residential Reserve designation from the 1981 General Plan is eliminated.

b. Policies. The policies of the Land Use Element express various issues and goals identified by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), the Planning Commission, the City Council and residents of Gonzales during the General Plan process. Policies address both local issues that would directly affect the City of Gonzales, and regional issues within the larger Planning Area. Land Use policies are divided into eleven goals guiding matters such as Small-Town Character, Historic Preservation, Downtown Neighborhood Conservation, Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development, and the Viability of Agriculture. Implementing actions ensure that the policies will be followed and goals will be met.

Many of the goals and policies in the Land Use Element are directed towards the future of urban growth in the City. Land Use policies ensure that the City of Gonzales will grow in an orderly progression while maintaining much of its small-town character. Policies ensure that new residential development will be compatible with the City's predominantly low density and small-town character, and will meet the housing needs of current and future Gonzales residents. The Land Use Element also contains policies to enhance the downtown area and discourage suburban sprawl. A Downtown Mixed-Use designation is an important feature in this effort. Policies for this designation encourage residential uses above commercial uses in the downtown. An overlay Historic District is included to protect historic resources. Other policies are directed at establishing stronger ties between existing, older neighborhoods west of Highway 101 and the new neighborhoods east of the highway.

Land Use policies also addresses the City's growth within the greater Planning Area. Land Use policies allow limited growth, but steer growth to areas away from the most productive agricultural areas. The Land Use Element acknowledges the value of productive agricultural soils surrounding the City and attempts to protect this resource through policies directing development to soils of lesser value and encouraging infill development.

2. Circulation Element

The Circulation Element's main objective is to provide a safe and efficient street system that would accommodate the increase in population and traffic at General Plan buildout. Circulation policies set level of service (LOS) standards that apply during peak periods. (Level of service is a way of

measuring street and intersection functioning using the ratio of traffic volume to intersection or road segment capacity.) Circulation policies recommend roadway improvements and other modes of transport to ensure that the level of service standard is maintained as development takes place.

Improvement policies update the City's current circulation system, identify the future need for traffic signals based on traffic signal warrant criteria, require the upgrade of several streets to arterial or collector standards, and recommend realignment of Gonzales River Road and Alta Street. The Element also addresses future cumulative traffic impacts associated with regional growth, particularly along Highway 101. Policies encouraging alternatives to single passenger automobiles include ridesharing, carpooling and a land use pattern that will make shopping, working and other activities possible with minimal driving.

3. Housing Element

The Housing Element updates the 1986 Housing Element and will remain effective until 1998. Under California Government Code Section 65583, the Housing Element must state how the City will provide for adequate, safe and affordable housing for existing and future Gonzales residents. The Housing Element also identifies issues such as the conservation and improvement of existing housing, the protection of community character, and energy and water conservation.

The Housing Element includes analyses of population and employment trends, existing and projected housing needs for all income levels, the availability of land and community services for new housing, and special housing needs in the community, including the needs of farmworkers, seniors, large families, and single parents. Based on General Plan buildout projections, housing is expected be sufficient to accommodate a population of 11,578 in 2015. This is in the mid-range of expected population growth based on current trends. The General Plan projects a total of 2,973 dwelling units in low, medium and high density residential neighborhoods at buildout in 2015.

The Housing Element contains policies to ensure that the City will meet housing needs, provide affordable housing, and address other identified housing issues. Housing Element policies support the annexation and rezoning of adequate land to meet projected housing needs of the General Plan. Policies also encourage the development of vacant, residentially zoned "infill" sites within existing City limits.

4. Community Health and Safety Element

The Community Health and Safety Element covers safety, as prescribed by Safety Element provisions of Government Code Section 65302 (g); and noise, as prescribed by Noise Element guidelines of Government Code, Section 65302 (f). The Community Health and Safety Element focuses on natural hazards, such as floods and earthquakes, as well as hazards resulting from human activity, such as the degradation of air and water quality, noise, and exposure to hazardous materials.

The Element identifies existing conditions of each natural hazard in the Planning Area and the increase in exposure to these hazards under General Plan buildout. The Element identifies areas in the Planning Area that would be prone to seismic hazards and major floods. Potential air pollution sources include emissions from industrial plants and vehicular use. Surface water is vulnerable to increased contamination from urban runoff. Noise levels would rise as a result of increased traffic and industrial uses.

Policies identify preventative and protection measures to reduce the risk of personal injury, loss of life, and damage to property resulting from natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. Measures to ensure clean, healthy air and water for Gonzales residents, and minimize exposure to hazardous materials are also identified. Noise standards are set at 60 dBA indoors and 70 to 75 dBA outdoors.

5. Environmental Resources and Conservation Element

The General Plan combines the required General Plan Open Space Element and Conservation Element, as prescribed by Government Code Sections 65302 (d) and (e), into the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element. The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element emphasizes the importance of conserving the two most valuable natural resources in the Planning Area: the Gonzales Slough; and the prime agricultural lands that surround the City.

Development under the General Plan could expose the Slough to new structures near its banks and subsequent erosion. Policies address this issue by maintaining the Slough as permanent open space and by restoring vegetation along its banks.

Most future development by the City within the Planning Area will require the annexation of farmland and its conversion to urban uses. The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element includes policies that minimize the loss

of valuable land by placing development on the less productive agricultural lands, and that permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram.

The Element identifies the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin as another resource that requires open space management in Gonzales. The City is dependent on groundwater for its municipal and industrial purposes and draws its water from three wells. Under the General Plan, future population growth will place greater demand on the groundwater supply. Policies address efforts to preserve the groundwater supply by conserving water and by supporting alternatives such as using reclaimed wastewater.

The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element also emphasizes the need for additional open space in the City to meet the growing population projected under General Plan buildout. Policies address the goal of creating a park system that meets the recreational needs of present and future Gonzales residents.

Policies also aim to protect archaeological resources in the Planning Area. Policies support the continued research on Native American settlements around the City and the protection of any archaeological artifacts or sites that are discovered.

6. Community Facilities and Services Element

This Element addresses public facilities and related services in Gonzales including water supply, sewage, drainage, solid waste, schools, social services and civic buildings. The Community Facilities and Services Element is essential in accommodating the needs of the expanding Gonzales population as projected by the General Plan. Policies and action programs address the need to expand current facilities and services in order to accommodate future growth under the General Plan.

The City's existing municipal facilities are inadequate to accommodate the population projection of 11,578 at General Plan buildout in 2015. The addition of 1,580 new dwelling units and more than five million square feet of commercial and industrial space will place greater demand on water supply in the Planning Area, generating the need for new wells, pumping stations, storage facilities, and distribution lines. This Element addresses this issue with policies that expand the water distribution system, permit development only when public water can be supplied, and promote water conservation measures.

Other municipal facilities will be affected by the General Plan. Expansion of the wastewater treatment plant and improvement of the collection system will be required to serve future growth. To ensure adequate sewage collection, treatment and disposal facilities, policies recommend increasing the capacity of the Gonzales wastewater treatment plant. The General Plan designates approximately 50 acres around the existing plant to accommodate future plant expansion.

The City's schools are currently overcrowded and future growth under the General Plan will worsen the problem. Specific policies are directed at expanding and improving school facilities to accommodate existing and future student populations. To fulfill this objective, action programs include acquiring new school sites and requiring proponents of new residential development to contribute to the acquisition of new land and facilities. Additionally, policies in the Element address the similar needs for future expansion and upgrades of the City's library and civic buildings.

7. Community Character Element

The purpose of the Community Character Element is to preserve the important cultural history of the City as well as to provide direction in the design of residential neighborhoods, downtown, commercial and industrial areas, open space and roadways. The City has established a major goal to preserve, enhance and strengthen community identity. The first part of the Community Character Element identifies the components of Gonzales' character, its boundaries, and the natural and built environment. It concludes with a set of Goals, Policies and Action Programs that relate to community character and the preservation of the City's historical assets.

C. General Plan Buildout Potential

Land uses for each category of the Land Use Diagram are shown in Table 2. The Land Use table indicates the total acreage for each designated land use under buildout conditions. The table also includes projections by land use category for dwelling units, square footage of commercial and industrial development, and employment.

The General Plan Planning Area covers 6,882 acres or almost 11 square miles.[5] Of that area, the City of Gonzales currently contains about 600 acres including the wastewater treatment plant which lies about 1.7 miles west of the rest of the City. The remainder of the Planning Area is unincorporated and encompasses about 6,282 acres.

The General Plan designates 549 vacant acres for urban uses in the Planning Area. Of that total, about 28 acres are located within the existing City limits and the remaining acres are located outside the City limits but within the proposed Sphere of Influence.

The General Plan designates 486 acres of residential land to accommodate a buildout population of 11,578 residents by 2015. Of the 549 acres of vacant land designated for development in the Planning Area, 277 acres are designated for residential uses: 252 acres for Low Density Residential; 17 acres for Medium Density Residential; and 8 acres for High Density Residential. This would result in potential new development of 1,478 dwelling units at General Plan buildout. In addition, the new Downtown Mixed Use area will contribute 102 additional dwelling units but will use no vacant acres. The projected 1,580 total new dwelling units contribute to a total population of 11,578 at General Plan buildout in 2015.

The remaining 272 acres of vacant developable land in the Planning Area are designated for Commercial, Industrial/Manufacturing, Public/Quasi-Public, and Parks and Open Space uses. The Industrial/Manufacturing, Commercial, and Public/Quasi-Public uses will result in approximately 4,850 new employees. The total employment at General Plan Buildout in 2015 is projected at 5,795 employees.

[5] This total does not include about 150 acres associated with freeways, roads and the railroad.

Table 2
GENERAL PLAN FUTURE LAND USE, POPULATION, AND EMPLOYMENT

Category	Total Acres	Vacant Acres	Existing Development[a]	Potential New Development	Total Development at Buildout	Total Population at Buildout[b]	Total Employment at Buildout
Low Density Residential	429	252	1,035 DU	1,179 DU[c]	2,214 DU	8,856	
Medium Density Residential	47	17	259 DU	159 DU[d]	418 DU	1,672	
High Density Residential	10	8	44 DU	140 DU[d]	184 DU	736	
Downtown Mixed Use	18	0	55 DU 150,000 SF	102 DU 230,625 SF[e]	157 DU 305,625 SF[e]	314	1,222[f]
Commercial	21	14	100,000 SF	312,015 SF	412,015 SF		742[f]
Industrial/Manufacturing	325	193	492,800 SF	4,203,540 SF	4,696,340 SF		3,287[f]
Public/Quasi-Public	135	57	Not Avail.				544[f]
Agriculture	5,870	(g)					
Parks and Open Space	27	8					
TOTAL[h]	**6,882**	**549**	**1,393 DU**	**1,580 DU**	**2,973 DU 717,640 SF-C 4,969,340 SF-I**	**11,578**	**5,795**

[a] 1,393 DU within City limits as of 1/1/94. Allocation of existing units into each category has been approximated based on aerial photos. Mixed use, commercial, and industrial square footage data is approximate and is based on aerial photos and field inventory. Data on square footage of Public/Quasi-public land use is not available.

[b] Based on 4 persons per household (PPH) for all areas except downtown mixed use, which uses 2 PPH (smaller unit sizes, senior housing, etc.)

[c] Assumes 317 units in California Breeze, 231 units on Anderson Ranch (north of Sunrise Ranch). On the remainder of the vacant land planned for residential use, development at 5.4 units per gross acre is assumed.

[d] Assumes development of vacant acreage at 9.7 units/gross ac for Medium Density Residential, 17.4 units/gross ac for High Density Residential.

[e] Assumes redevelopment of 50 % of the land area in the Downtown Mixed Use District (50 percent of 615,000 SF, or 307,500). Assumes Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0 (see page II-22 for explanation of FAR), yielding 307,500 SF of floor space. Assumes second floor residential uses in half of the redeveloped buildings, yielding 76,875 SF of residential floor space and 230,625 SF of non-residential floor space. Assumes residential floor space contains 20 % non-rentable area (stairways, hallways) yielding 61,500 SF in rentable space. At 600 SF per DU, yield is 102 DU. Also assumes 50 % of existing commercial space (75,000 SF) is removed due to redevelopment with new commercial space.

[f] Downtown mixed use employment based on 250 SF per employee (AMBAG pers. communication, 7/5/95). Commercial employment based on 1.8 employees for 1,000 SF (traffic generation standard). Industrial employment based on 0.70 employees per 1,000 SF (based on the existing winery). Public employment estimate is based on 1990 Census estimate of employment in "public administration" (151) and "education" (72) as a percentage of 1990 population (223/4,660 = 4.7 percent), pro-rated to Year 2015 population (4.7 percent of 11,578 is 544).

[g] Development potential for agricultural land not calculated because subdivision of farms into 40-acre residential parcels is not anticipated, nor encouraged, by this Plan. Acreage for agriculture covers the entire planning area, including land outside proposed sphere of influence.

[h] About 150 additional acres in the Planning Area are associated with freeways and the railroad and are not shown in this table.

Source: *Brady and Associates, 1995.*

Chapter IV
SETTING, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

■ ■ ■

This chapter describes the environmental setting of the General Plan Planning Area as it relates to each environmental topic, the potential impacts resulting from General Plan buildout, and mitigation measures that would reduce impacts through adopted policies.

1. Issues Addressed in the Draft EIR

The following environmental issues are addressed in this chapter of the Draft Environmental Impact Report:

- Land Use and Public Policy
- Population, Employment and Housing
- Traffic, Access and Circulation
- Visual Resources
- Soils, Geology and Hydrology
- Biotic Factors
- Cultural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Infrastructure and Municipal Services

2. Format of Issue Sections

Each topic area of this chapter will have the following general format:

a. Existing Setting. This section describes the existing conditions of each topic that could be affected by any identified impacts of the General Plan.

b. Criteria of Significance. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a significant effect is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial adverse change in the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21068). The guidelines implementing CEQA direct that this determination be based on scientific and factual data. Impacts raised in this chapter are based on Appendix G of the Guidelines to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which outlines the general criteria for determining significant effects of a project.

c. Impacts and Mitigations Discussion. This section includes discussions of issues that correspond to the identified criteria of significance.

Identified impacts are designated according to their level of significance. For each significant impact that is identified, measures are included to mitigate the impact. The level of significance of the impact after mitigation is also noted.

This section also includes discussions of General Plan policies that prevent or reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels.

A. Land Use and Public Policy

■ ■ ■

1. Existing Setting

a. Existing Land Use. The General Plan Planning Area covers about 11 square miles, extending about one mile in all directions beyond the City limits and extending slightly further on the west to include the City's wastewater treatment plant along the Salinas River.

Beyond the City limits, the Planning Area is farmland, predominantly vegetable row crops. The land to the north of the City is flat, containing vegetable crops and farm homes surrounded by clusters of mature trees. To the east, parcel sizes are generally larger than those to the north; trees are generally absent and there is a gentle upslope to the east. South of the City, truck farms and fields of row crops dominate the flat landscape. To the west of the City, the Planning Area includes several agricultural businesses and packing sheds along Gonzales River Road and west of the Southern Pacific railroad tracks.

Parcel sizes outside of the City limits are large, generally ranging from 40 acres to over 500 acres. There has been virtually no rural residential ("ranchette") development along the City's perimeter. Consequently, the transition from urban uses to agricultural uses is often abrupt.

The 1981 General Plan designated two areas for future urban expansion. One area was located east of U.S. Highway 101 and the other area was located north of the City between the Southern Pacific railroad track and U.S. Highway 101. Urban expansion would most naturally have progressed to the north and gradually filled in the area between the freeway and the railroad. However, Monterey County purchased an agricultural easement on the property immediately north of the City limit, making expansion in that area infeasible. Therefore, the General Plan now proposes urban expansion to the east and west of the current City limits.

Growth was slow in Gonzales until the 1980s. However, between 1980 and 1994 the City's population doubled from 2,900 to 5,800 residents. Most of the growth resulted from residential development. Residential growth occurred in the area east of Centennial and Fairview Drives and east of U.S. Highway 101. The first project east of Highway 101, Arroyo Estates, was constructed in the late 1980s, followed by Sunrise Ranch during the early 1990s. Within five

years, 283 new dwelling units were built east of the freeway, increasing the number of dwelling units in the City by about 30 percent.

With this rapid increase in population and development, land available for further development within the City limits has decreased rapidly. Requests to convert agricultural land to urban uses with annexation to the City have been frequent since 1990.

(1) Agriculture. Outside of the City limits, the City of Gonzales is surrounded by farmlands. The Gonzales Planning Area contains approximately 5,835 acres of agricultural lands, comprised mainly of lettuce, strawberries, broccoli, nursery crops, wine grapes, and seed crops.

In addition to the favorable climate, the region's soils have made the Salinas Valley one of the most productive agricultural areas in the nation. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture classifies agricultural soils under its *Important Farmland Inventory System*. The classifications, in order of decreasing productivity, are prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, unique farmland, and farmland of local importance. The Gonzales Planning Area contains prime farmland and farmland of statewide significance, as shown in Figure 4. The farmland west of the City is generally better for agricultural production than the land to the east because the soils have greater sand content and good water retention characteristics. Figure 4 shows that the western farmland area is classified as prime farmland. Although the land east of the City is classified as both prime farmland and farmland of statewide significance, the soils have a higher clay content and tend to require more water for agricultural production.

(2) Residential Development. According to the State Department of Finance, as of January 1994, there were 1,393 dwelling units in Gonzales. This total includes 985 single-family units, 382 multiple family units, and 26 mobile homes. Under the 1981 General Plan, there are presently only two categories of residential density: low and medium density. Low Density Residential is defined as one residential unit on one lot, with a detached building being permitted if it is designed and occupied exclusively by one family. Two-family dwellings are also permitted with a detached building designed for and occupied by two families living independently of one another. Densities in the low density residential area range from 1 to 7 units per acre.

The Medium Density designation consists of triplexes, four-plexes and multiple dwellings including apartments, condominiums, dwelling groups and mobile home parks. Densities range from 8 to 21 units per acre. The medium density development is distributed throughout the City with some

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FIGURE 4
Important Farmlands

small concentrations of higher density housing at the higher end of this range around A, B, and C Streets and east of Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Streets. There are also a number of higher density units clustered together in the new developments east of the freeway.

(3) Commercial Development. As of 1994, commercial uses occupied about 250,000 square feet of built space. Commercial uses include the Gonzales Shopping Center, the commercial buildings on the south side of Fifth Street East of Highway 101, and commercial stores in the downtown area.

(4) Industrial Development. Existing industrial uses are estimated at 492,800 square feet. Industrial uses include the Monterey Vineyards and Winery, the Dole Carrot Company, and packing sheds west of Alta Street.

(5) Community Facilities. Most of the City's community facilities are located in the area bounded by the railroad tracks to the west and Highway 101 to the east. The three public schools, Gonzales Union High School, Fairview Middle School, and Gloria Elementary School are all located east of Gonzales Slough. The three schools and the Gonzales Union High School Stadium dominate a significant portion of the City's landscape and serve as a focal point for the community.

Other community facilities are located throughout the downtown area east of Gonzales Slough and between Eighth and C Streets. Existing facilities include City Hall located at Belden and Fifth Streets, a Post Office, and a fire station located on Center Street between Third and Fourth Streets. The police department is located in City Hall.

A branch of the Monterey County Library recently relocated from the downtown to the Gonzales Shopping Center.

There are three existing public parks totaling about 14 acres. Centennial Park, located on First Street at Gonzales Slough, covers 7.9 acres and includes a swimming pool and a baseball field. Central Park, bounded by Center, Day, Fifth, and Sixth Streets, covers 2.8 acres and occupies an entire City block. Central Park is a popular community gathering place with picnic, barbecue, playground, basketball, and volleyball areas. A third park of about three acres has been dedicated in the new California Breeze subdivision east of Highway 101.

(6) Undeveloped Land. As of 1994, only 28 acres of land within the City limits remained vacant. Most of the vacant land within the existing City limits is designated for industrial uses under the General Plan.

b. Existing Plans and Policies.

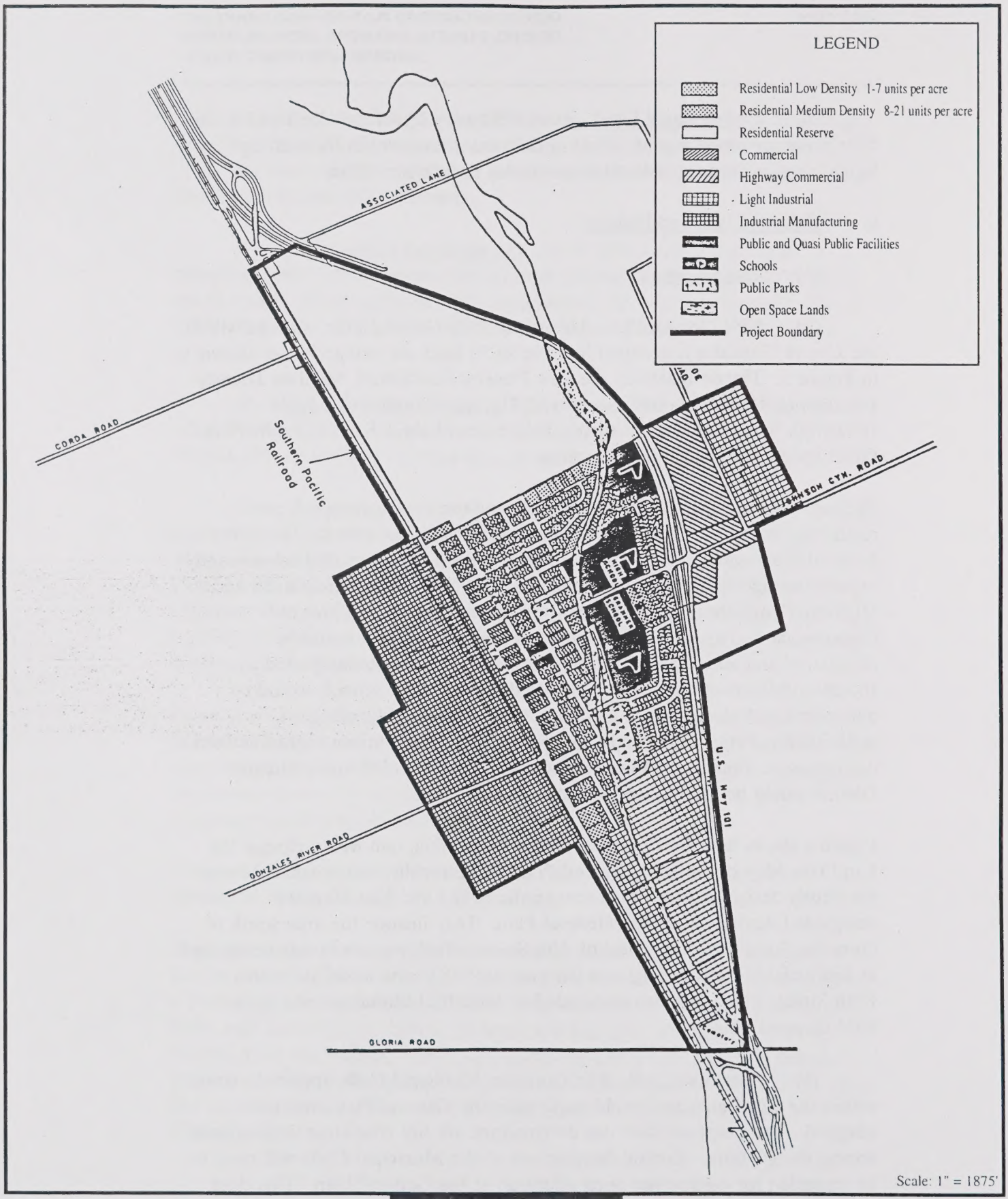
(1) City of Gonzales.

(a) 1981 General Plan. Under the 1981 General Plan, all land within the City of Gonzales is grouped into one of 11 land use categories, as shown in Figure 5. The designations are Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Neighborhood Commercial, Highway Commercial, Light Industrial, Industrial/Manufacturing, Public/Semi-Public, School, Public Park, Open Space, and Agriculture Preserve.

The new General Plan would modify the land use designations. A new residential category, High Density Residential, would be added. The new General Plan would also add a new Agricultural designation and subsequently expand the size of the Planning Area. The Neighborhood Commercial and Highway Commercial designations would be modified into a broader Commercial designation. The Light Industrial designation would be eliminated and all industrially-designated land would be redesignated as Industrial/Manufacturing. The separate designation for schools would be eliminated and placed into a modified Public/Quasi-Public category. Additionally, Public Parks and Open Space would be combined into one land use category. Finally, a Downtown Mixed Use designation and a Historic District would be established for the downtown area.

Figure 6 shows how the General Plan Land Use Diagram would change the Land Use Map of the 1981 General Plan. Additionally, two areas that were previously designated for urban uses in the 1981 Land Use Map are designated Agriculture in the General Plan. They include the area south of Gonzales River Road and west of Alta Street, which was previously designated as Industrial Manufacturing; and the area east of Fanoe Road and north of Fifth Street, which was also designated as Industrial Manufacturing in the 1981 General Plan.

(b) Municipal Code. The Gonzales Municipal Code applies to lands within the City limits and would implement the General Plan once it is adopted. The proposed land use designations are not consistent with current zoning designations. Zoning designations of the Municipal Code will need to be amended for consistency upon adoption of the General Plan. This does not mean that zoning maps and the Land Use Diagram must be identical.



NORTH

SOURCE: Gonzales General Plan, 1981.

GONZALES
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FIGURE 5
1981 General Plan Land Use Plan

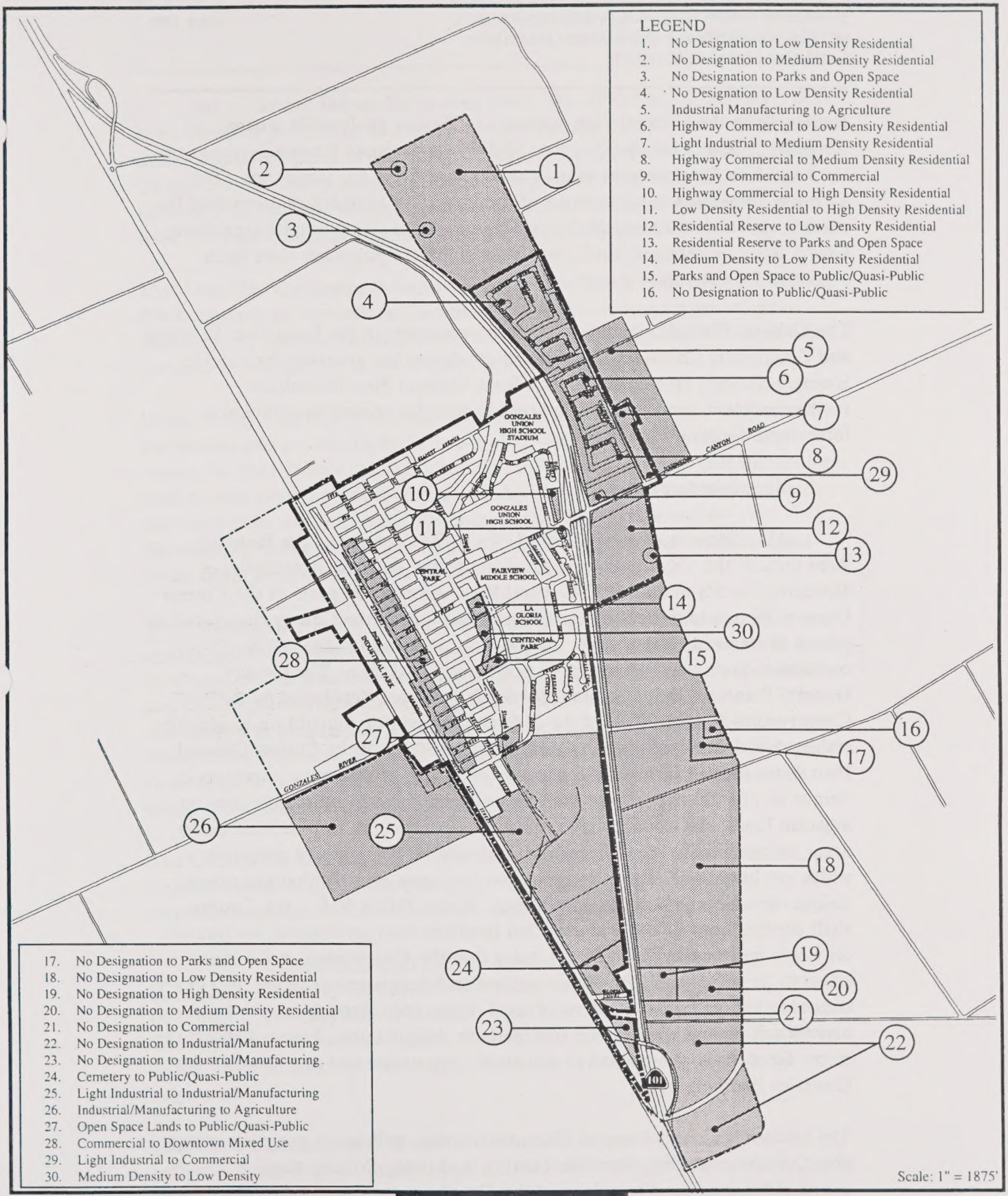

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FIGURE 6
Change in Land Use Designation

Rather, since the General Plan responds to 20-year goals while zoning responds to immediate needs, some of the land designed for development on the Land Use Diagram may remain zoned agriculture for some time. For example, Implementing Action 1.6 of the Land Use Element requires that the current agricultural zoning of the designated planned commercial area along Gloria Road be retained until specific development proposals have been approved for the adjacent area.

The General Plan also contains policies, particularly in the Land Use, Housing and Community Character Elements, that address the necessity for specific zoning ordinance amendments. The State General Plan Guidelines recommend that two years is a reasonable limit for zoning amendments following a General Plan revision.

(2) Monterey County.

(a) Monterey County General Plan. The portions of the Planning Area outside the City limits remain subject to the land use jurisdiction of Monterey County and its 1993 General Plan. One of the goals of the County General Plan is to protect all viable farmlands within the County designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance from conversion to and encroachment of non-agricultural uses. The County General Plan uses the *Important Farmlands Inventory*, developed by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to identify viable agricultural lands in the County. Policy 30.0.2 of the County General Plan states that all farmlands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique or of local importance shall be protected from incompatible uses on adjacent lands; the County shall require that permanent, well-defined buffer areas be provided as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent to agricultural land uses on soils that are prime, unique, or of local/statewide importance. Under Policy 30.0.1, the County shall prevent non-agricultural uses that interfere with agricultural operations on viable farmlands. Policy 30.0.4 states that the County shall make every effort to preserve viable farmland on farmland designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance through large lot agricultural zoning applications and land use designations. Figure 4 shows the prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance that are found in the Gonzales Planning Area.

The Monterey County General Plan also includes policies to promote orderly growth while protecting desirable existing land uses. Policies require coordination between the cities and the County to manage the type, location, timing and intensity of growth.

(b) *Central Salinas Valley Area Plan.* The 1993 Central Salinas Valley Area Plan is a part of the Monterey County General Plan. The Area Plan is one of eight area plans of Monterey County which address local issues. The Central Salinas Valley Area Plan must be fully consistent with the County General Plan and any policies and land use modifications contained within the Area Plan are considered amendments to the County Plan.

The Area Plan designates the area outside of the City and within the Gonzales Planning Area as Agricultural Farmlands at 40-acre minimum parcel sizes. This category includes the classifications designated by the Soil Conservation Service and recognized in the County General Plan.

Under Policy 26.1.13.2 of the Area Plan, the County shall review proposals for annexation and pre-zoning by Salinas Valley cities, such as Gonzales, to ensure the protection of prime farmland. Policy 26.14.2 states that the County shall protect prime, productive farmland by designating less viable farmlands adjoining cities with an Urban Reserve overlay designation and by discouraging annexation of prime, productive farmlands next to cities if less viable lands are available for annexation and expansion.

The Plan supports industrial uses if they maintain the County's environmental quality and the expansion of the economic base. Industrial development must be as compact as possible, minimize nuisances, have adequate transportation and be compatible with surrounding uses. Commercial uses are also encouraged as long as they are close to major residential areas and transportation routes. The Plan states commercial uses should be developed in a compact manner and encourages a mix of residential and commercial areas, if the uses have good site design.

The County will also actively pursue cooperative land use planning with Central Salinas Valley cities especially with regard to city expansion, watershed management, water resources planning, and soil conservation.

(3) Monterey County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Monterey County LAFCO is the responsible agency for all Sphere of Influence determinations. LAFCO establishes a City's Sphere of Influence and approves annexations of land. This EIR is intended to be used for those determinations and any Planning Concern Area designation that is to be requested.

LAFCO considers several factors in determining/approving a City's sphere of influence, including the capability of the local agency to provide essential and urban services; the existence of agricultural preserves, agricultural lands and

open space lands; and the proposed sphere of influence's consistency with relevant plans, including the County General Plan. LAFCO policy states that annexation of prime agricultural lands should be consistent with Monterey County General Plan policies which seek to protect prime agricultural lands.

LAFCO policies also state that development should be guided away from prime agricultural lands toward areas containing non-prime agricultural lands unless this would not promote the planned development of the area. Development within the proposed Sphere of Influence should be encouraged before approval of annexation which would lead to conversion of existing open space lands to other than open space uses.[1]

(4) Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD). The relevant policies of the District's Air Quality Management Plan are discussed in Chapter IV, Section J, Air Quality.

2. Criteria of Significance

The significant impacts summarized in the following section are those that meet the following land use criteria set forth by Appendix G, Significant Effects, of the CEQA Guidelines.

- The General Plan would result in the conversion of prime agricultural land to urban uses or impair the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural land.
- The General Plan would create incompatibilities among existing land uses.
- The General Plan would be inconsistent with adopted environmental plans and goals of the community.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have significant impacts according to the CEQA criteria stated above.

a. Land Use Conversion. The lands surrounding the City limits in the Gonzales Planning Area are all either prime farmland or farmland of statewide significance. The General Plan would provide for urban development on lands with such soils.

[1] LAFCO, Jim Cook, personal communication.

Impact LU-1. General Plan buildout would allow for the conversion of 525 acres of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. (S)

To a greater extent, the land to the west of the City limits is more suitable for agricultural production than the land to the east because of high quality soils, greater sand content and good water retention characteristics. The soils to the east of Gonzales contain more clay and consequently use more water; however, they are still comprised of prime soils in the top two categories of the *Important Farmland Inventory System*. The Land Use Element of the General Plan includes the goal of minimal loss of prime farmland in and around the Planning Area.

> Mitigation Measure LU-1. Adopt and implement General Plan policies and action programs that attempt to limit the conversion of prime agricultural land for urban uses.

Land Use policies 3.1 - 3.5 and corresponding action programs address the loss of agricultural land. Although policies and action programs attempt to limit the conversion of prime agricultural land for urban uses in the Planning Area, the conversion will nevertheless occur under the General Plan. Conversion of agricultural lands cannot be avoided short of prohibiting growth outside the current City limits. Therefore, this impact remains significant and unavoidable. (SU)

b. Land Use Compatibility. Buildout of the General Plan would place more urban and agricultural uses adjacent to each other. Extending the developed area on the east side of Highway 101 further north of Fifth Street and south of the interchange would expose a new "edge" of residential and commercial uses to adjacent agricultural operations. Conflicts which commonly occur between agricultural and residential uses are residential complaints about agricultural noise, dust, and odors. Agricultural operators, meanwhile, complain about injury to farm animals from domestic pets and of unrealistic expectations of adjacent residents.

The General Plan Land Use Element contains policies and implementing actions that would reduce such potential conflicts to less than significant levels. Policy 3.6 discourages the development of parcels surrounded on all sides by agricultural uses. Implementing Action 3.3 requires site plans for properties along the City limits to minimize potential conflicts with permanent agricultural operations. Specified measures to minimize these conflicts include siting residential backyards so as not to directly abut areas planned for long-term agriculture and siting less sensitive uses such as parking, roads, storage, and landscaping adjacent to the agricultural areas. Under Action 3.4, "Right

to Farm" disclosure notices should be used for new residential developments that are built adjacent to the active agricultural operations; these notices would inform prospective homebuyers of potential impacts of adjoining agricultural operations. Implementing Action 3.7 requires the strict enforcement of trespassing and domestic animal control laws to minimize interference with adjacent farm operations.

Goals, policies, and implementing actions in the Community Health and Safety Element and the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element also address the reduction of potential conflicts between incompatible land uses to less than significant levels. Relevant policies and implementing actions are addressed in the Noise, Hazardous Materials, and Soils, Geology and Hydrology sections of this chapter.

Additionally, the Land Use Diagram shows a roadway, the Fanoe Road extension, between the residential uses and agricultural lands. The Fanoe Road extension would serve as a divider between the primarily low density residential uses west of the road and the agricultural uses east of the road. Residences would not be immediately adjacent to farmlands, therefore reducing any incompatible uses between the two land uses. Finally, the agricultural-related industries to the west of town are more compatible with the growing of agricultural crops so fewer conflicts would occur west of Alta Street, where industrial uses adjoin agricultural uses.

The General Plan also contains policies and actions to reduce potential conflicts between commercial and residential uses to less than significant levels. Typically, these conflicts stem from noise infiltrating a residential area but can also result from commercial truck traffic driving in residential areas. In the Community Health and Safety Element, Policy 2.3 requires that specific noise standards for various land uses be followed, including maximum acceptable exterior noise levels of 60 dB in residential areas. Action 8.7 requires new commercial uses that are close to existing or future residential areas to demonstrate compliance with noise standards prior to project approvals. Circulation Policy 8.3 requires that the presence of trucks on residential trucks be limited through restrictions on truck parking and truck through-traffic. Policy 3.3 of the Community Character Element encourages the integration of residential and commercial uses in downtown Gonzales if new residential uses do not conflict with established commercial development. Moreover, Community Character Policy 3.5 requires that commercial development outside of downtown be designed to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent residential areas.

If the policies of the General Plan are adopted as proposed, there would be no significant land use impacts from incompatible land uses.

c. Conformity with Existing Plans. Under the General Plan, the City of Gonzales would annex adjacent agricultural lands in the Planning Area to accommodate future growth. Policies contained in the Monterey County General Plan and the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan discourage the conversion of prime, productive agricultural lands for urban expansion if less viable farmlands are available, as described in the existing setting section. All vacant infill lands within the City are designated for urban development, and the City has no other available land within the city limits for urban expansion. The General Plan designates future residential expansion to the east of the City limits on land that is the least agriculturally productive. Urban uses designated on the more productive lands to the west of Alta Street and north of Gonzales River Road are primarily agricultural-related industries. While development there would still cause the loss of prime agricultural land, any subsequent effects on the remaining operations would have less impact than residential uses would.

The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element contains policies and implementing actions which ensure that future growth will be consistent with other relevant plans and policies for the region, particularly the Monterey County General Plan and the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan. Implementing Action 1.1 of the Element requires the City to work with Monterey County to maintain agricultural zones on land in the Gonzales Planning Area but outside the proposed sphere of influence. This is consistent with the County General Plan policy to establish agriculture zoning districts for viable farmlands in the County.

Policies in the Land Use Element would also be consistent with County policies. Land Use Policy 1.9 requires the City of Gonzales to support the concept of "City-Centered Growth" in the Salinas Valley. This concept concentrates urban uses in and around southern Monterey County cities and conserves the majority of the Salinas Valley for agriculture. Additionally, the Gonzales General Plan is consistent with Monterey County General Plan Policy 30.0.2 that addresses incompatible land uses between viable agricultural lands and adjacent land uses; the previous Land Use Compatibility impacts section provides a detailed discussion of relevant Land Use policies.

The General Plan designates most future urban uses on agricultural farmlands with the least productive soils. Additionally, policies and action programs protect adjacent farmlands with the establishment of zoning districts and controlled development. The General Plan is consistent with the Monterey

County General Plan and the Salinas Valley Area Plan. The Air Quality section of this chapter addresses the General Plan's consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District.

B. Population, Employment and Housing

■ ■ ■

1. Existing Setting

The purpose of this section is to use available data to establish the baseline population, housing, employment, and jobs/housing conditions for the City of Gonzales. It will be used as a background against which to evaluate the potential impacts of the General Plan.

Data on the City's demographic and employment characteristics were primarily obtained from the 1990 federal Census. Some data published by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) are also presented. Data for the City of Gonzales are often compared to those for the County and State to illustrate how the City is similar to, or different from, the larger County and State populations. For a complete analysis of Gonzales' demographic, employment and housing figures, the Housing Element of the General Plan should be consulted.[1]

a. Population. Gonzales gained more residents in the 1980s than in the previous three decades combined, at an annual growth rate triple the County-wide average. The City's population increased from 2,900 in 1980 to 5,800 in 1994. Table 3 illustrates population growth in Gonzales and the County between 1950 and 1990.

Compared to other cities in the County, Gonzales was one of the slower growing cities until the 1980s. Other cities such as nearby Soledad, Greenfield and King City grew rapidly during the 1970s. Gonzales' population surge began in the 1980s as commuters traveling to jobs in the north took advantage of the City's affordable single family housing and its small town atmosphere.

[1] The boundaries of the City of Gonzales form the unit of measurement for much of the descriptive and analytical text and tables in the Existing Setting and Impacts sections throughout this EIR. The use of the City limits or, in select cases the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) boundaries, for purposes of description, measurement and comparison stems not only from the fact that most data are collected for these areas, but also from the fact that they delineate the zone within which most of the potential adverse environmental impacts of urban development would be realized. This is because the General Plan limits growth to the SOI.

(1) Age Distribution. The average age of Gonzales' population is significantly lower than the County's average. According to the 1990 Census, almost 42 percent of the City's population was under the age of 19, compared to the overall County's average of 31 percent of the population under the age of 19.

(2) Household Size. The City's household average size is one of the highest throughout the State. The 1990 Census reported the average household size in Gonzales to be 4.06 persons per household, compared to 2.96 in the County and 2.79 in the State. In 1990, 23 percent of the City's households had 6 or more persons, compared to 9 percent in the County and 7 percent in the State. Conversely, only 12 percent of Gonzales' households contained one person, whereas 20 percent and 23 percent were single person households in the County and State, respectively.

According to the State Department of Finance, the average household size in Gonzales has continued to rise during the 1990s. As of 1994, the average household size in the City had 4.4 persons.

(3) Household Type. Gonzales has a higher proportion of family households than the County and State averages. According to the 1990 Census, approximately 85 percent of the households in Gonzales were families, compared to 73.5 percent in Monterey County and 69 percent in the State.

b. Employment. In 1990, there were 1,646 employed persons in Gonzales. More than 40 percent of the employees worked in agricultural activities, including agriculturally related industries and services. Agriculture remained as the City's economic and employment base throughout the 1980s. Table 4 provides a complete profile of Gonzales' labor market in 1980 and 1990. Although agriculture is still the base of Gonzales' economy, a growing number of residents are employed in non-agricultural jobs outside of the City.

Approximately 70 percent of Gonzales residents commute to work outside of the City. The City of Salinas to the north is the main destination, with 38 percent of the City's commuters working there in 1990. Most of the remaining commuters worked in Soledad or on the Monterey Peninsula.

(1) Unemployment. The 1990 Census indicated an unemployment rate of 18.5 percent among Gonzales' labor force; for persons of Hispanic origin, the unemployment rate was 21.6 percent. Both figures are higher than the State's average. Unemployment in Monterey County is typically higher than the Statewide average due to the seasonal nature of the agriculture and tourist employment.

Table 3
POPULATION GROWTH IN GONZALES AND MONTEREY COUNTY, 1950-1990

Year	Locale	Population	# Change	% Change
1950	Gonzales	1,821	--	--
	County	130,498	--	--
1960	Gonzales	2,138	317	17.4
	County	198,351	67,853	52.0
1970	Gonzales	2,575	437	20.4
	County	247,450	49,099	24.8
1980	Gonzales	2,891	316	12.3
	County	289,861	42,411	17.1
1990	Gonzales	4,660	1,769	61.2
	County	355,662	65,801	22.7

Source: AMBAG, 1992, U.S. Census, 1950-1990.

Table 4
EMPLOYMENT OF GONZALES RESIDENTS, 1980 and 1990

	Employment 1980	% of Total	Employment 1990	% of Total
TOTAL	1,065	100.0	1,646	100.0
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	437	41.0	673	40.9
Construction	48	4.5	37	2.2
Manufacturing	77	7.2	113	6.9
Transportation	24	2.3	34	2.0
Communication/Utilities	6	0.6	27	1.6
Wholesale Trade	20	1.9	138	8.4
Retail Trade	115	10.8	124	7.5
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	29	2.7	59	3.6
Business & Repair Services	20	1.9	123	7.5
Personal, Entertainment, Recr. Services	17	1.6	41	2.5
Health Services	65	6.1	42	2.6
Education Services	127	11.9	72	4.4
Other Professional Services	40	3.8	12	0.7
Public Administration	40	3.8	151	9.2

Source: U.S. Census 1980, 1990.

(2) Household Income. The medium household income in Gonzales in 1989 was $25,458, compared to $33,520 in the County and $35,978 in the State. About 25 percent of all Gonzales residents were living below the poverty level compared to 12 percent for the County. Children living in single parent households comprised the largest percentage of the total number living below the poverty level. Table 5 indicates the poverty status in Gonzales and the County in 1989.

The percentage of Gonzales households that were classified as "very low" and "low" income rose slightly between 1979 and 1989. In addition Gonzales has a greater share of the region's lower income population. As of 1989, 33 percent of Gonzales households had very low incomes and 20 percent had low incomes.[2] In comparison, about 38 percent of all households throughout Monterey County were classified as low or very low income during the 1980s.

c. Housing. As of January 1994, there were 1,393 dwelling units in the City of Gonzales. The majority of the housing in Gonzales are of single family detached residences. Of the 1,393 existing dwelling units in the City, there are 985 single family dwelling units, 382 multi-family units of mostly duplexes and triplexes, and 26 mobile-homes. The vacancy rate is about 9 percent in the City according to the 1990 Census in comparison to the County's vacancy rate of 6.8 percent. Rental units tend to take longer to rent in the City than in the County. Similarly, houses in Gonzales tended to sell more slowly in 1990 than throughout the County. About 16 percent of the City's housing is more than 50 years old, indicating a need for rehabilitation.

(1) Housing Value. Houses are less expensive in Gonzales than in the County as a whole. The median home value in Gonzales was 62 percent of the County median, and the median rent was 84 percent of the County median. Lower home prices in Gonzales is a significant contribution to the City's population increase.

(2) Housing Affordability. About 29 percent of all owner households and 57 percent of all renter households paid more than a quarter of their income for housing in 1989. Such households are described as overpaying for housing, according to the State.

(3) Overall Housing Needs. State law requires each city and county to meet its "fair share" of regional housing needs. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) determines this "fair share"

[2] Based on the 1990 Census.

Table 5
POVERTY STATUS IN GONZALES AND MONTEREY COUNTY, 1989

	Gonzales		Monterey County	
	Persons Below Poverty Level	Percent of Total in Category	Persons Below Poverty Level	Percent of Total
All Persons	1,169	25.2	38,818	11.6
Children in Married Couple Families	219	18.4	8,226	10.9
Children in Single Parent Households	347	72.0	7,461	38.5
Persons 18-65	559	21.4	20,356	9.9
Senior Citizens (Over 65)	29	8.7	2,207	6.7

Source: U.S. Census 1990.

need. AMBAG's *Regional Housing Needs Plan* determined that Gonzales needed to add 554 new units from January 1989 to July 1996. Pro-rating this target, the City needed to produce about 240 units by 1993. Gonzales came close to this target with 230 units. The State recently extended the horizon year for local governments to meet their regional housing needs; Gonzales' fair share should now be accommodated by the year 2000.

(4) Housing Needs by Income. In 1990, households with very low incomes made up 33 percent of the households in the City. Low-income households made up 20 percent and moderate-income households made up 21 percent. According to AMBAG, 291 low-income renter households and 81 low-income owner households were overpaying for housing in 1990. The Housing Element distributes the countywide need for very low, low and moderate-income housing using a formula which is based on 1990 Census data. The outcome of this projection results in a higher number of units for Gonzales than earlier AMBAG allocations. This distribution indicates a need for 95 units for very low-income households, 30 units for low-income households, and 105 units for moderate-income households by the year 2000.

(5) Special Housing Needs Populations. There are distinct groups in the City of Gonzales with "special housing needs" which the private market alone cannot effectively fulfill. These groups include large lower-income families, the elderly, single mothers, farmworkers, disabled persons and the homeless.

Low-income senior citizens make up 29 percent of the households in Gonzales. There are approximately 154 disabled residents in the City. Large families, which consist of six people or more, comprised 23 percent of Gonzales households in 1990. Large households with low incomes often have difficulty obtaining large enough units to accommodate the entire household and consequently live in overcrowded conditions. Farmworker households, which continue to increase in number in Gonzales, need low-cost housing. Single mothers and their children made up 11 percent, of Gonzales' households in 1990. The high incidence of poverty among Gonzales' single-mother households indicates a need for social services, child care, health care and job training, as well as housing assistance.

d. Jobs-Housing Balance. In the simplest of terms, Gonzales could be described as having an excess of residential land when compared to employment-generating land. In 1990, Gonzales had 1,222 dwelling units housing 1,640 employed residents. There were 492,800 square feet of industrial space and 150,000 square feet of commercial space, together employing about 900 workers (about 500 of whom lived in Gonzales, and 400 of whom commuted into the City). About 1,150 other Gonzales residents commuted out of the City to jobs. This commuting contributes to local and regional traffic, air pollution and noise.

In terms of low-income housing and job types, Gonzales has a greater number of low paying jobs than it has appropriately priced dwellings to house employees of those jobs. In 1990 there were 374 two to four-plex units, multi-family units and mobilehome housing. At the current average of 1.48 workers per household, these units would accommodate 553 workers, slightly more than the number of Gonzales residents who work in Gonzales. Statistics indicating overcrowding in low-income housing suggest a need for additional low-income housing for people working in the City. These same data suggest a smaller number of higher-income jobs when compared with higher-priced housing. The number of residents commuting to Salinas and other cities reflects this imbalance.

2. Criteria of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project will normally have a significant adverse impact on the environment if it will induce substantial growth or concentration of population.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Population. Population projections are used to estimate how much land will be needed for new housing and employment in the City. Overall projections for the Monterey Bay Area are based on factors such as employment, birth and death rates, and migration trends. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) takes figures for the region as a whole and allocates them to cities based on local growth policies, specific development plans, and the availability of public services. In 1994, AMBAG projected Gonzales' population would increase to 8,500 residents by 2015.

However, based on the major growth in Gonzales in the past decade, it is likely that the City will reach 8,500 residents long before 2015, the General Plan's horizon year. A more likely scenario is that growth will slow down somewhat and that population will be between 8,000 and 14,000 residents by 2015. The City of Gonzales has identified a desirable target population of 10,000. However, the General Plan designates 277 acres for future residential development which would result in 1,580 additional dwelling units under General Plan buildout. At four persons per household for low, medium and high density development and two persons per household for downtown mixed uses, these units would accommodate about 6,100 new residents, for a total population of 11,578 in 2015. The excess land is provided to give the housing industry some flexibility in selecting sites and to recognize that not all landowners with property with the residential designations would sell or develop their properties by the Plan's horizon year of 2015. The ample land supply also recognizes that development will not always occur at the maximum density.

The population projections of the General Plan are consistent with the current population growth trend for Gonzales. The General Plan would accommodate projected growth but would not induce growth beyond the current growth rate. The General Plan would therefore not have a significant adverse impact on the City's population.

b. Employment. The General Plan designates 499 acres for industrial, commercial, public/quasi-public, and downtown mixed uses that would potentially result in a total of 5,796 jobs in the City. In 1990, more than 40 percent of Gonzales employees worked in agricultural activities, including agriculturally related industries and services, as shown in Table 4, which compares employment of Gonzales residents in 1980 and 1990. Under the General Plan, over half of the total jobs at buildout would be in industrial and manufacturing uses. The employment provided by the General Plan's designations for industrial, manufacturing, commercial and other uses would

be similar to current employment in the City. Therefore, the General Plan would not result in a significant impact on employment.

c. Housing. The Housing Element of the General Plan contains numerous goals, policies and action programs that address the need for sufficient and affordable housing for Gonzales' current and future residents. Policy 2.2 encourages the balanced distribution of housing that is affordable to lower and moderate income households rather than concentrating such housing in a single location. Policy 2.4 encourages the use of a variety of incentives to encourage affordable housing production, including density bonuses, waiver or reduction of development fees, streamlined permitting, and the use of public funds to reduce development costs.

Policies also address the goal of providing increased housing opportunities for special needs populations such as large families, disabled persons, senior citizens, single parent families, and farmworkers. Policy 8.2 encourages the development of housing for special needs groups such as seniors, disabled persons, large families, single-parent families and farm workers, and Policy 8.4 encourages the development of affordable housing which incorporates social services such as day care centers for single mothers.

The General Plan would therefore not result in a significant adverse impact on housing in Gonzales.

d. Jobs/Housing Balance. If the land designated for industrial development were to build out at allowable densities within the planning period, the jobs-housing balance could potentially be reversed and workers would commute from other areas. However, the reason for designating a large area for industrial use is to give industry more locations to choose from. As stated in the General Plan, it is unlikely that these areas will build out during the planning period. Although new industrial development is likely to be more dense than existing industry (which has a floor area ratio[3] less than 0.1), it is unlikely that most of it will probably be built to the maximum allowable density by 2015, the General Plan's horizon year. The level of development provided in the General Plan would lead to approximately 4,850 additional jobs, close to the number of residents who could be housed in the designated residential areas.

Because policies and actions contained in the General Plan would accommodate growth at the current growth rate of about 5 percent per year, there would be no significant adverse housing or population impacts as a result of General Plan buildout. If industrial development occurs at the rate and densities envisioned by the General Plan, the relationship between jobs and housing would shift toward a more balanced position.

[3] Floor area ratio is the ratio of building floor space to lot area.

C. Traffic, Access and Circulation

■ ■ ■

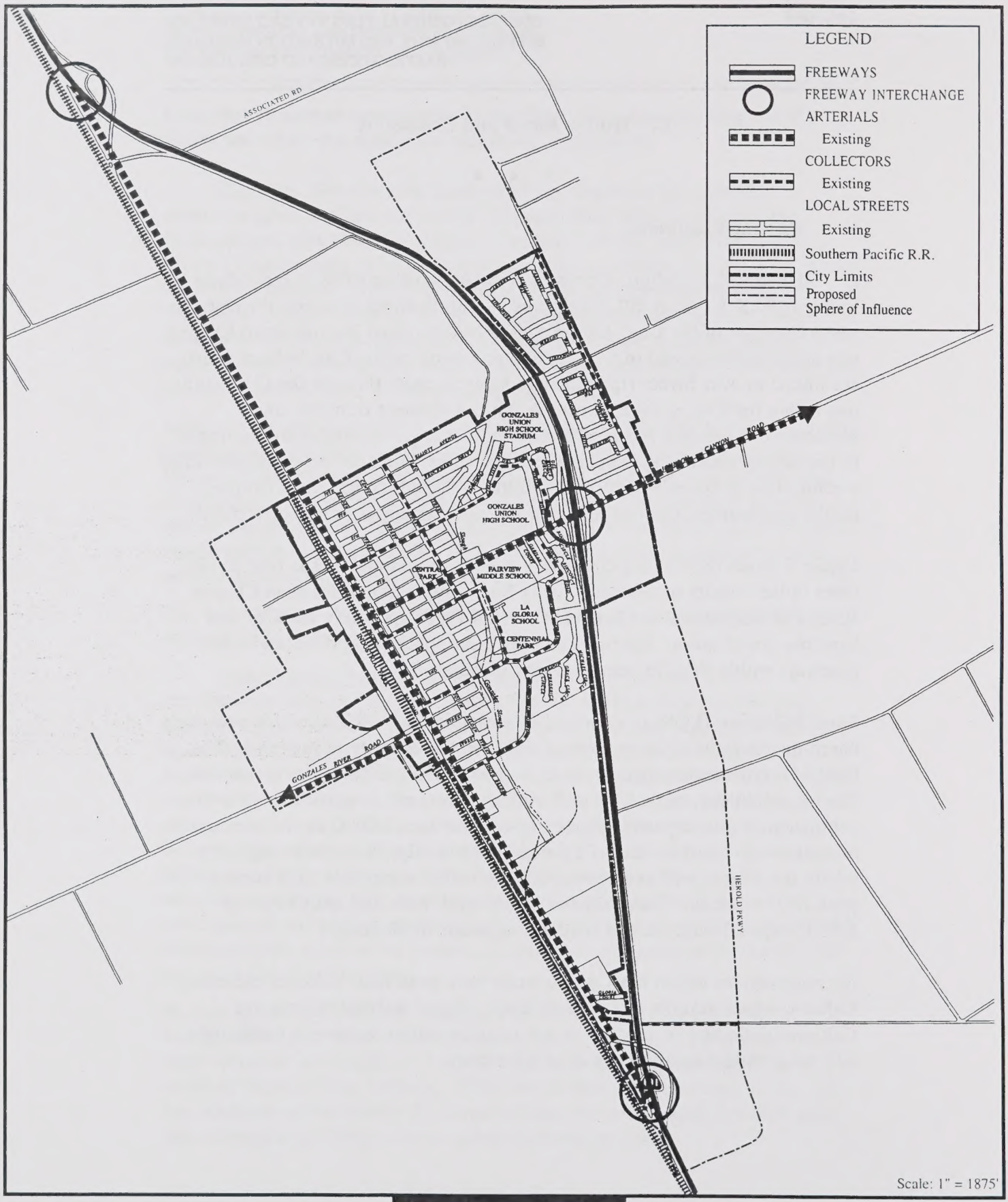
1. Existing Conditions

a. Existing Circulation. Gonzales is linked to other cities in the Salinas Valley by U.S. Highway 101 which runs in a north-south direction through the eastern section of the City. Gonzales is served by three freeway interchanges: one at the southern end of the City and one north of the City, both of which are linked by Alta Street (the old state highway route through the City); and one within the City at Fifth Street. A full complement of north- and southbound ramps are provided at each interchange. Gonzales is also linked to the county roadway system via Gonzales River Road (to the west, providing a connection to River Road-County Route G17), Old Stage Road (to the north) and Johnson Canyon Road (to the east, connecting to Iverson Road).

Figure 7 shows the existing circulation system. Highway 101 has four travel lanes in the vicinity of Gonzales. Alta Street, Fifth Street, Johnson Canyon Road and Gonzales River Road are arterial roadways within the City and have two travel lanes. Existing PM peak hour volumes on these and other roadways within the City are presented in Figure 8.

Level of Service (LOS) is a method of measuring how well a road is operating, based on the ratio of the volume of traffic to the capacity of the road. The level of service scale ranges from LOS A to LOS F. LOS A represents free flowing conditions, while LOS of F indicates extreme congestion, with traffic volumes well over capacity. Currently, the City uses LOS C as the minimum acceptable standard for most City streets. Presently, all roadway segments within the City as well as Highway 101 are within acceptable LOS standards at peak hour volumes. Table 6 shows typical peak hour and daily two-way LOS C capacities for various roadway segments in Gonzales.

No intersections within the City currently have peak hour volumes exceeding Caltrans signal warrant #11 criteria levels. Signal warrant criteria are Caltrans' definition of whether or not an intersection requires a traffic light, and are included as Appendix A of this report.



NORTH

SOURCE: Crane Transportation Group, 1992

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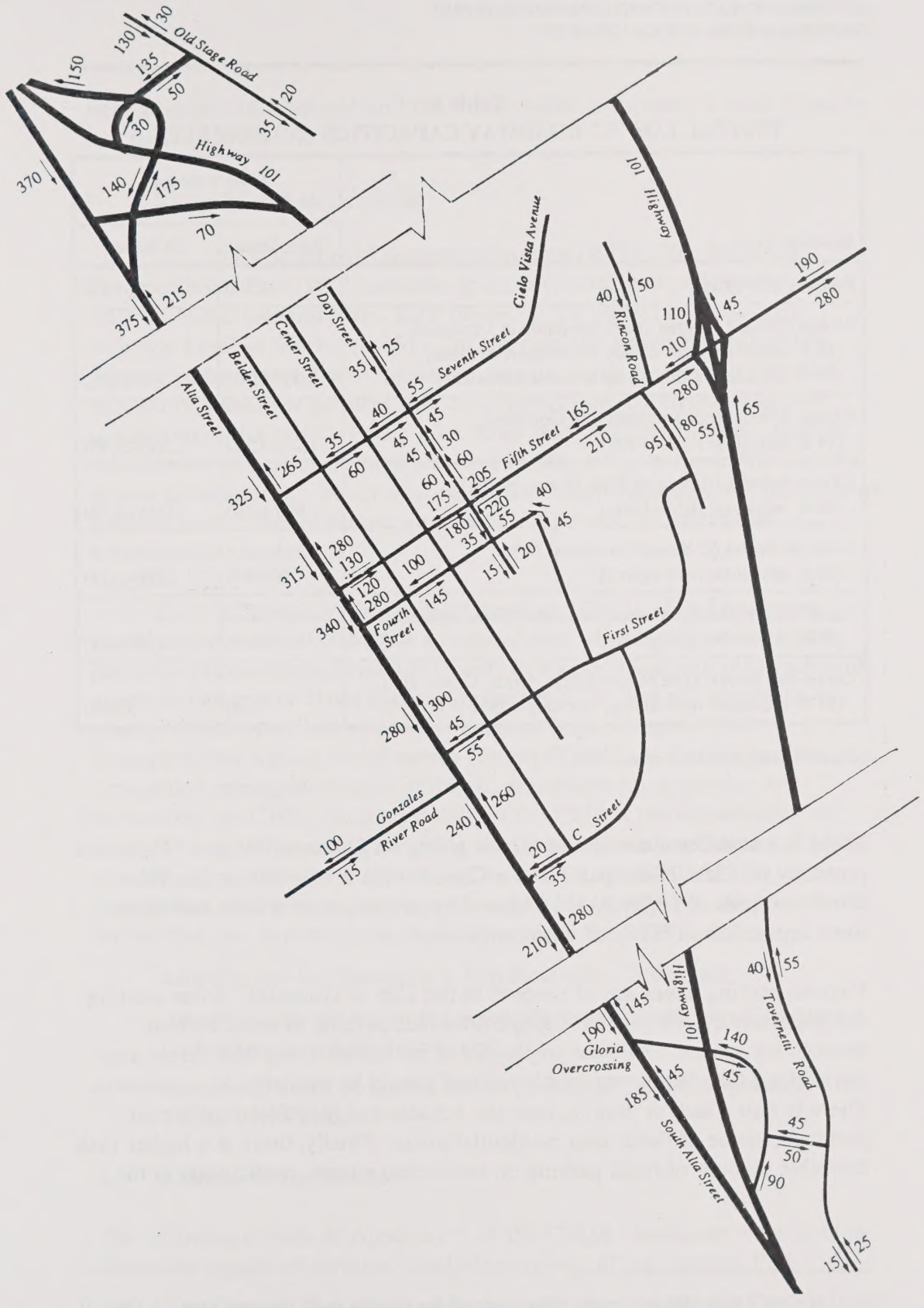
FIGURE 7
Existing Roadway System



NORTH

SOURCE: Crane Transportation Group, 1992

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FIGURE 8
1992 PM Peak Hour Volumes (4:45 - 5:45)

BRADY AND ASSOCIATES
PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Table 6
TYPICAL LOS "C" ROADWAY CAPACITIES IN GONZALES

Roadway Type	Total Vehicles in Both Directions	
	Peak Hour	24 Hours
Freeway (US 101)	5,760	57,600
4-Lane Divided Arterial (none presently in Gonzales) (86 ft. minimum right-of-way in commercial areas) (80 ft. minimum right-of-way in residential areas)	2,200-2,700	22,000-27,000
4-Lane Arterial (none presently in Gonzales) (64 ft. minimum right-of-way)	1,250-2,200	12,500-22,000
2-Lane Arterial (Alta St or Fifth St east of 101) (80 ft. minimum right-of-way)	600-1,250	6,000-12,500
Collector Street (C Street/Centennial Drive) (64 ft. minimum right-of-way)	200-600	2,000-6,000
Local Streets (Belden, Center, Second, Eighth, etc.) (60 ft. minimum right-of-way)	30-200	300-2,000
Cul-de-Sac Streets (Del Monte Circle, Grace Circle, etc.) (50 ft. minimum right-of-way, not longer than 400 ft.)	5-30	50-300

Source: Brady and Associates, 1994.

There is a significant amount of bicycle riding on Gonzales' streets. There are presently no Class I bike paths, but a Class II bike lane exists on the Fifth Street overpass of Highway 101.[1] Most City streets are very wide and allow some separation of bike and auto traffic.

Various parking issues are of concern in the City of Gonzales. Some existing developments do not provide enough off-street parking to serve current demand for spaces. Seasonal employees of industries along Alta Street also use parking that downtown merchants feel should be available for customers. There is also a lack of parking near the schools and insufficient off-street parking in some of the denser residential areas. Finally, there is a higher than desirable amount of truck parking on residential streets, particularly in the

[1] A Class I bike path is a paved route reserved for bicycles in an unpaved area. A Class II bike path is a striped corridor within a street right-of-way which is reserved for bicycles. A Class III bike path is shared with motorists and is identified only by signs.

northwest part of town and on Fifth Street which is currently a truck route to and from Highway 101.

b. Existing Plans and Policies.

(1) 1994 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) contains goals, objectives and policies that are relevant to the General Plan. RTP Objective 1.1 "strives to attain and maintain Level of Service (LOS) C for the roadway network in Monterey County." Objective 1.2 is to "minimize environmental impacts and conflict with existing land use patterns that could result from construction of new transportation facilities." Policy 1.1.1 states that "land use planning shall be coordinated with transportation planning to fully mitigate the traffic impacts of new development." Policy 1.2.2 states that "improvements must maintain or improve traffic level of service on streets and provide for alternative transportation modes."

(2) Congestion Management Program (CMP). The Congestion Management Program (CMP) is a regional plan whose goal is to address congestion problems in Monterey County in coordination with other relevant agencies, particularly those agencies responsible for land use approvals, air quality, transit provision, and street and road improvements. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) is the designated "congestion management agency" that is responsible for approving and monitoring the CMP. Implementation of the CMP is the responsibility of local and regional agencies, including the City of Gonzales, Caltrans, TAMC, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD), and Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). As a local jurisdiction, the Gonzales' responsibilities under the CMP include:

- adopting and implementing a Trip Reduction Ordinance;
- collecting information on the success/failure of local Trip Reduction Ordinances in reducing trips; and
- monitoring Level of Service within its jurisdiction in cooperation with TAMC and Caltrans.

2. Criteria of Significance

The following criteria of Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines were used to determine significant adverse circulation impacts of the General Plan.

- The General Plan would result in traffic that exceeds the City's level of service (LOS) standards for streets and intersections.

- The General Plan would significantly worsen existing parking conditions.
- The General Plan would be inconsistent with adopted plans and goals of the community.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

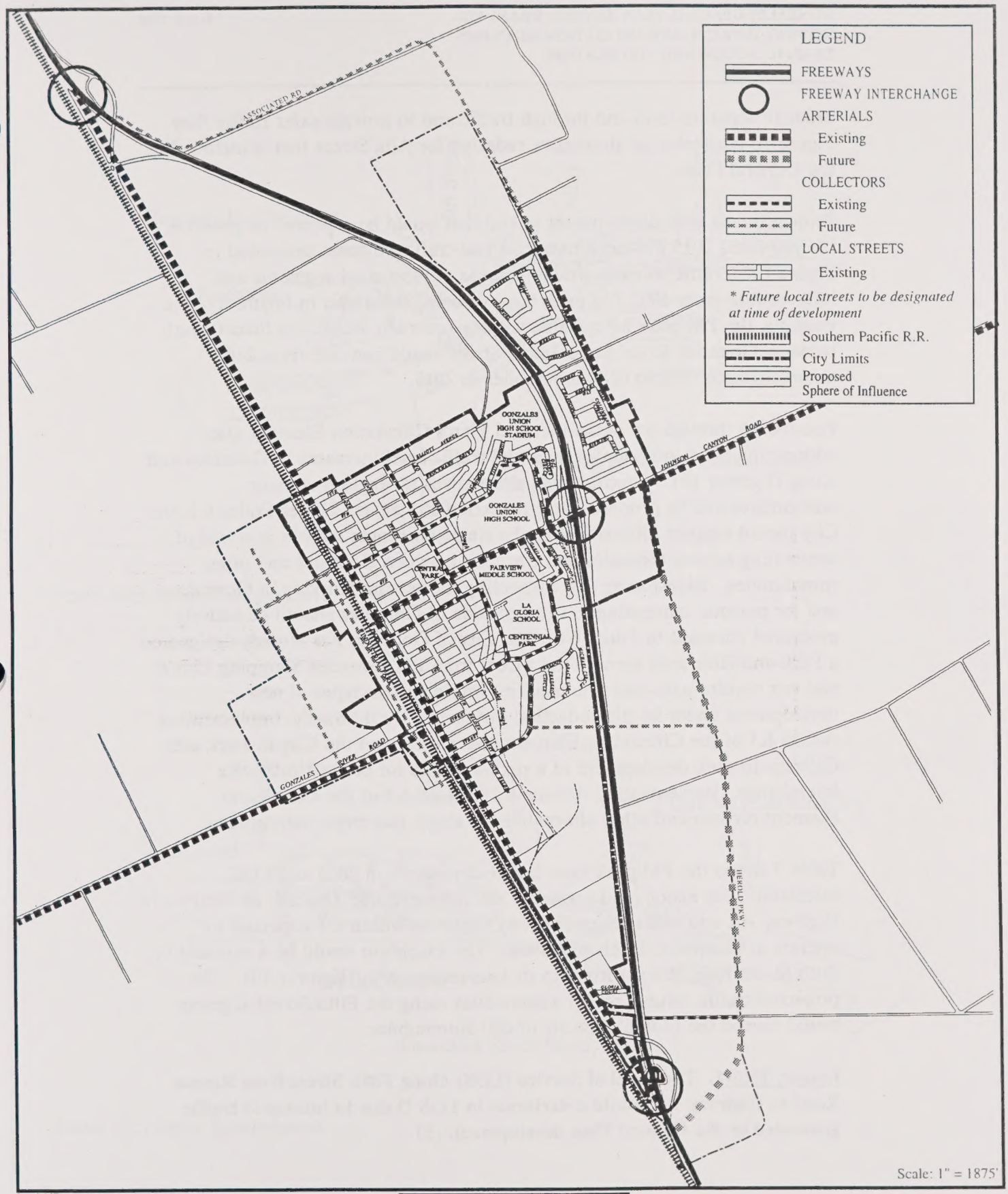
This section discusses whether the General Plan would have a significant adverse impact on traffic according to the CEQA criteria given above. The General Plan would have a significant adverse impact on one intersection and this section proposes a mitigation measure for that impact.

General Plan buildout traffic volumes and trip distribution to local roadways have been projected on the basis of existing circulation patterns and several assumptions: that the percentage of employed residents living and working in Gonzales will rise from 31 percent (1990) to about 40 percent at General Plan buildout; that a majority of the remaining 60 percent of employed residents will commute north of the City; and that there would be a small increase in commuting to the south. These assumptions were based on the travel habits of local residents, which are included in the 1990 U.S. Census.

a. Traffic Volume. The General Plan proposes roadway improvements to keep roads and intersections within acceptable levels of service. Figure 9, the Circulation Diagram, shows all of the proposed roads for the Gonzales Planning Area. Although the entire Planning Area is not depicted in Figure 9, existing roads such as Gonzales River Road and Johnson Canyon Road continue within the entire Planning Area, as shown in Figure 2 of this document. The major changes depicted by the Circulation Diagram include:

- Extension of Herold Parkway south, eventually joining Highway 101 at the South Alta interchange.
- Extension of Fanoe Road north, serving the area north of Sunrise Ranch and eventually connecting north to Associated Road and west to Highway 101.
- Extension of C Street east, across Highway 101 and continuing to the new Herold Parkway extension.
- Construction of a horseshoe-shaped collector street connecting at both ends to Gonzales River Road with an outlet east to Alta Street.

The General Plan also recognizes future necessary improvements to Alta Street in order to keep it within acceptable traffic levels. Circulation Policy 4.5 recommends the redesign of Alta Street between First and Eighth Street in



NORTH

SOURCE: Crane Transportation Group, 1995

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FIGURE 9
Circulation Diagram

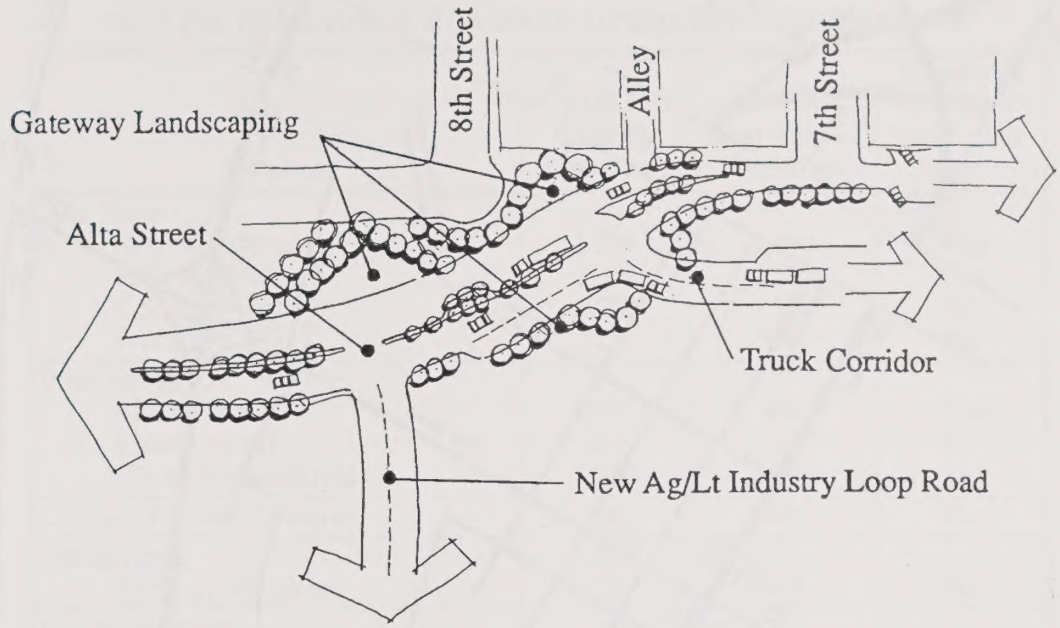
order to separate local and through traffic and to provide safer traffic flow. Figure 10 illustrates an alternative redesign for Alta Street that is included in the General Plan.

Proposed new area development at buildout would be expected to generate the projected 2015 PM peak hour buildout traffic volumes presented in Figure 11. Traffic volumes would increase at most road segments and intersections from 1992 PM peak hour volumes (as shown in Figure 8). For example, the PM peak hour traffic volume recorded along Alta Street south between Gonzales River Road and C Street would increase from 240 automobiles in 1992 to 610 automobiles in 2015.

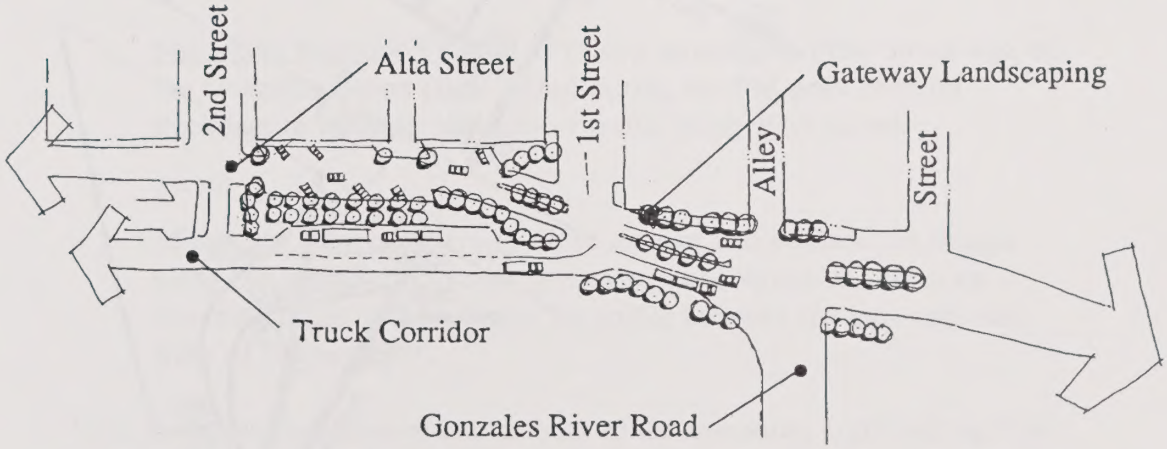
Policies 6.1 through 6.6 of the General Plan's Circulation Element also address the need to minimize potential traffic level increases in Gonzales and along Highway 101 by encouraging alternatives to single passenger automobiles and by proposing trip reduction strategies. Under Policy 6.1, the City should support alternatives to the single passenger vehicle as a way of commuting around Gonzales and traveling between Gonzales and other communities. Ridesharing and carpooling for persons working in Gonzales and for persons commuting to work outside of Gonzales should be actively promoted pursuant to Policy 6.6. The City of Gonzales has already designated a Park-and-Ride area across Fifth Street from the Gonzales Shopping Center and can require park-and-ride facilities within certain types of new development under its trip reduction ordinance. Additionally, Implementing Action 6.1 of the Circulation Element also encourages the City to work with Caltrans to seek development of a park-and-ride lot at the North Alta interchange. Implementing Actions 6.2 through 6.6 of the Circulation Element recommend other alternatives to single passenger automobiles.

Table 7 shows the PM peak hour buildout volumes in 2015 and LOS calculations for major road segments and intersections. Overall, all sections of Highway 101 and other major roadway segments within are expected to operate at acceptable levels of service. The exception would be a segment of Fifth Street from Rincon Road to its intersection with Highway 101. The projected traffic volume of 725 automobiles along the Fifth Street segment would exceed the LOS C capacity of 600 automobiles.

Impact TRA-1. The Level of Service (LOS) along Fifth Street from Rincon Road to Highway 101 would deteriorate to LOS D due to increased traffic generated by the General Plan development. (S)



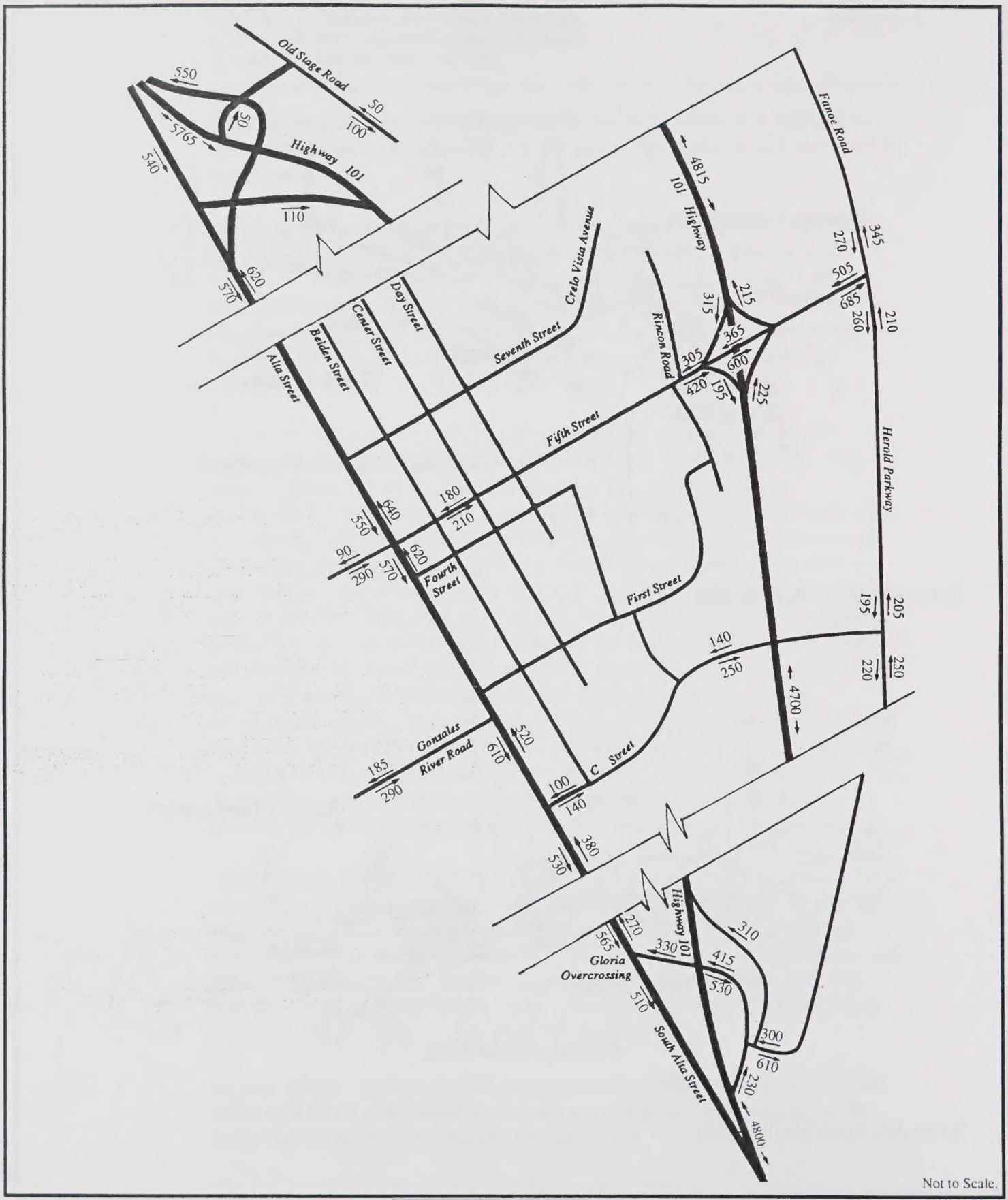
North Alta Street Realignment



South Alta Street Realignment

Note Sketches are illustrative only and should not be interpreted as an "adopted" plan for Alta Street.

FIGURE 10
Alternative Design for Alta Street



SOURCE: Crane Transportation Group, 1995

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FIGURE 11
PM Peak Hour Volume 2015 (4:45-5:45)

Table 7
2015 PM PEAK HOUR ROADWAY OPERATING CONDITIONS

Location	LOS C Capacity (Two-Way)	PM Peak Hour Volume (Two-Way)	Acceptable Operation? (LOS C or better)
Alta Street			
North of Tenth	1,250	1,190	Yes
Fifth to Tenth	1,250	1,190	Yes
C St. to Fifth	1,250	1,130	Yes
South of C St.	1,250	910	Yes
Fifth Street			
Alta to Day	600	400	Yes
Rincon to 101	600	725	No
101 to Fanoe/Herold	1,250	1,190	Yes
C Street Freeway Overpass	600	390	Yes
Fanoe Road			
North of 5th Street	750	615	Yes
Herold Parkway			
South of 5th Street	1,250	470	Yes
U.S. 101 Freeway			
North of "north" interchange	5,760	5,765	Borderline
North of 5th St. interchange	5,760	4,815	Yes
South of "south" interchange	5,760	4,800	Yes

Source: Crane Transportation Group, 1995/1996.

Mitigation Measure TRA-1a. Prohibit parking on Fifth Street east of the Gonzales Union High School during the PM peak hour on weekdays to facilitate the flow of traffic along Fifth Street.

and/or

Mitigation Measure TRA-1b. Use signage and intersection design along the proposed C Street overpass to encourage its use as an alternate route to Fifth Street for traffic between the east and west sides of Highway 101.

With the implementation of one or both of the measures, traffic along Fifth Street between Rincon Road and Highway 101 would be reduced to LOS C, the standard for the City, thereby reducing the impact to a less than significant level. (LS)

b. Plan Consistency. The Gonzales General Plan is generally consistent with the 1994 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Congestion Management Program. RTP Policy 1.1.1 states that land use planning should be coordinated with transportation planning to fully mitigate the traffic impacts of new development. The circulation system and development pattern proposed in the Gonzales General Plan are interdependent.

Policies contained in the Circulation Element of the General Plan address the need for coordination with County, regional, State, and Federal agencies. Circulation Policy 9.1 requires that the City work with Monterey County, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), and the regional Congestion Management Agency to develop and implement plans which reduce congestion, improve air quality, and reduce single occupant home-to-work driving trips. Gonzales should coordinate local transportation improvements with other agencies to ensure consistency between local and regional/statewide actions, especially as they pertain to Highway 101, pursuant to Circulation Policy 9.2. Gonzales should provide data to the County to assist in the updating and implementation of the Congestion Management Program.

D. Visual Resources

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1. Existing Setting

The City of Gonzales is located in the midst of highly productive agricultural lands. The Gabilan Mountain Range is visible to the east of the City and the Sierra de Salinas Range is visible to the west. The topography of the City and the Planning Area is flat. Outside of the City, field roads and local access roads create a rectangular pattern on the land. Clusters of farm houses and outbuildings with clumps of trees are scattered around the landscape. Farming activities and elements such as field workers, buses, cars and field equipment are visible from developed areas within the City.

The City itself has a large water tower which is visible for several miles. The newer residential developments are visible from Highway 101, particularly sound walls that have been constructed along the highway right-of-way.

2. Criteria of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project will normally have a significant adverse impact if it will have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have a significant adverse impact on visual quality, according to the CEQA criterion stated above. Under the General Plan, residential development is designated east of Highway 101, and Industrial/Manufacturing development is designated north and south of Gonzales River Road, a scenic highway. Residential development would require soundwalls adjacent to Highway 101. Although the General Plan would allow significant residential, commercial and industrial development, views of the adjacent landscapes would not be significantly affected.

The Community Character Element of the General Plan contains policies and implementing actions to prevent significant visual impacts associated with new residential, commercial and industrial development and roadways. Policy 8.2 encourages the preservation of hillside and farmland views in developed areas and in areas planned for future development. The Gabilan Mountain Range to the east and the Sierra de Salinas Range to the west would still be visible

under General Plan development. To address the impacts of industrial development west of Alta Street, Community Character Policy 8.4 requires the screening or improvement of the negative visual images associated with truck parking lots, utility substations, and storage or maintenance yards. Additionally, Policy 4.1 requires the improvement of the physical appearance of the industrial area along Alta Street and Gonzales River Road through landscaping, signage, and limitations on truck parking.

Implementing Action 8.1 states that new development built adjacent to Highway 101 should use vegetation, landscaped soundwalls, and berms to the extent feasible. Implementing Action 6.2 and 7.8 of the Land Use Element encourages the City to develop design guidelines which reflect the policies of the Community Character Element.

The policies and implementing actions contained in the General Plan and described in this section would prevent significant adverse impacts, therefore, the General Plan would not result in any significant adverse impacts on the visual quality of the Gonzales Planning Area.

E. Soils, Geology and Hydrology

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1. Existing Setting

a. Soils and Topography. The Salinas Valley is one of the most productive agricultural areas in the nation. The soils in the Gonzales Planning Area are all classified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and the State Department of Conservation as either prime agricultural soils or soils of statewide significance[1] (see Figure 12). The land west of Gonzales is somewhat better than the land east of the City. It has good quality soil, with more sand and good water retention characteristics. The land to the east is also considered very good but contains more clay; higher clay content means that more water must be used during farming.[2] The Land Use and Public Policy section of this chapter discusses the relation of prime farmland and farmland of statewide significance to proposed land use categories in the Planning Area. The existing setting, impacts and mitigation measures related to agricultural lands and soils are also given in that section.

Table 8 includes the Soil Capability Unit of each of the soil types identified in Figure 12. Capability grouping generally indicates the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops. In the capability system, all soils are grouped at three levels: capability class, subclass, and unit. Capability units in classes I through IV are given Arabic numbers that suggest the chief kind of limitation responsible for placement of the soils in the capability class and subclass. Capability classes, the broadest groups, are designated by Roman numerals I through VIII. The numerals indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for practical use. Capability subclasses are soil groups within one class and are designated by adding a small letter to the class numeral. Capability units are designated by Arabic numbers that indicate the chief kind of limitation responsible for replacement of the soil in the capability class and subclass.[3] Descriptions for soil capability classes, subclasses, and units are included in Appendix B of this report.

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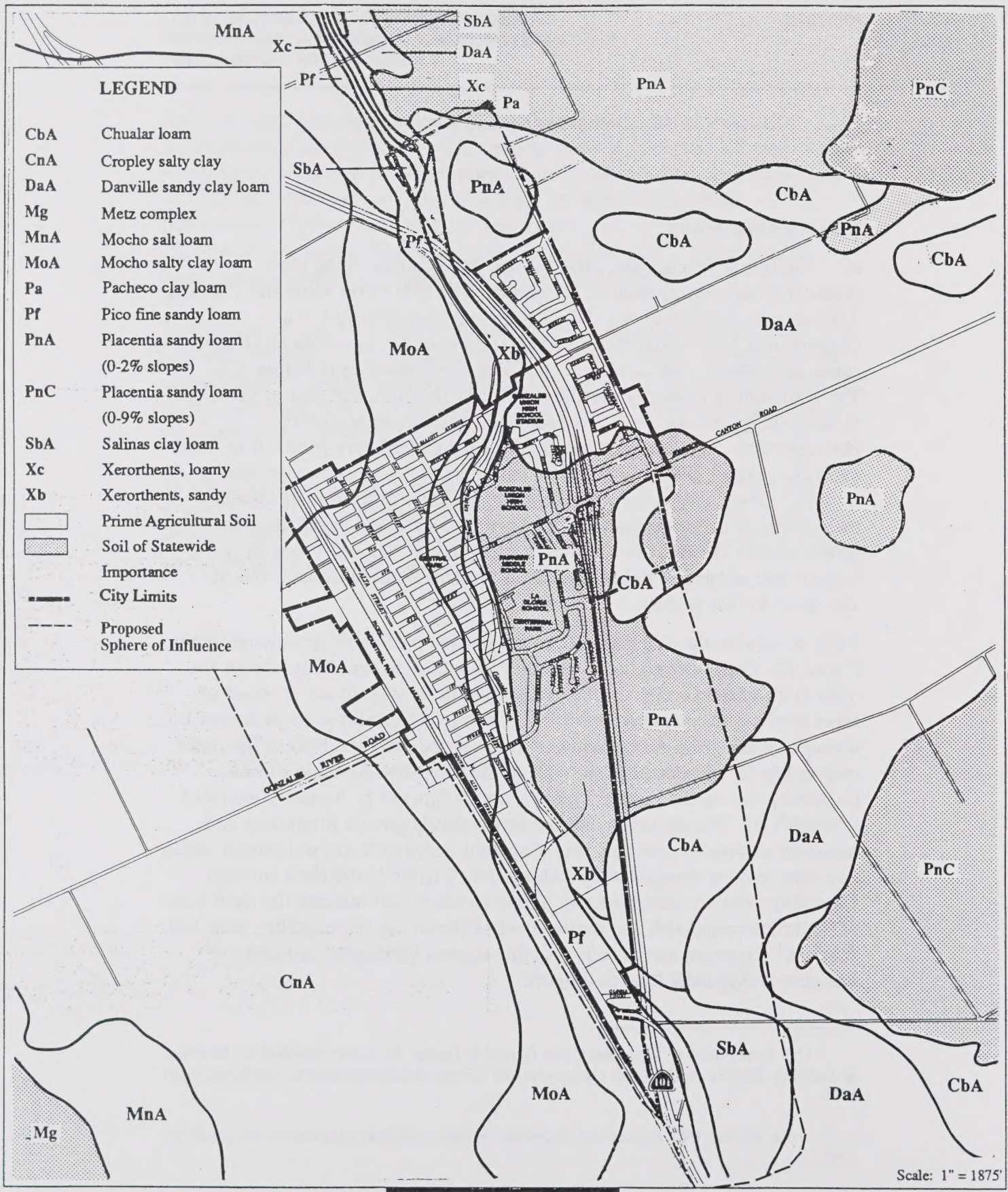
[1] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Soil Candidate Listings for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Significance, Monterey County* and *Soil Surveys of Monterey County, California,* April 1978.

[2] John Inman, UC. Agricultural Extension Service, personal communication, April 17, 1993.

[3] United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Monterey County*, 1978.



GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN

FIGURE 12
Soils

SOURCE: Soil Conservation Service Manual for Monterey County, U.S.D.A., 1982.

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PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Table 8
SOIL CAPABILITY UNITS

Soil Type	Capability Unit
Chualar loam (CbA)	IIe-1
Cropley silty clay (CnA)	IIs-5
Danville sandy clay loam (DaA)	IIs-3
Metz complex (Mg)	IVe-4
Mocho silt loam (MnA)	IIIc-1
Mocho silty clay loam (MoA)	IIIc-1
Pacheco clay loam (Pa)	IIw-2
Pico fine sandy loam (Pf)	IIIc-1
Placentia sandy loam (0-2% slopes) (PnA)	IIIs-3
Placentia sandy loam (2-9% slopes) (PnC)	IVe-3
Salinas clay loam (SbA)	I
Xerorthents, loamy (Xc)	VIe-1
Xerorthents, sandy (Xb)	VII-1

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Monterey County*, 1978.

The Gonzales Planning Area is located in an alluvial valley of recent origin (Qal) which was carved by the Salinas River (see Figure 12). The valley trends in a northwest-southeast direction. The depth of alluvium is estimated to vary between 880 and 1000 feet. The low rolling foothills of the Gabilan Mountains lie to the east of Gonzales. These upland areas are non-marine terrace deposits of the Pleistocene Epoch, Quaternary Period (Qt). Both marine (Qt) and non-marine (Qal) deposits originated from the surrounding mountains. The valley fill was deposited as a result of physical and chemical weathering. The parent rocks of the higher areas eroded and the alluvium was transported by water, wind and gravity to form the valley fill.[4]

[4] Denise Duffy and Associates. *Draft Environmental Impact Report for LOL Investments Produce, Shipping and Processing Facility,* November 1991.

The topography of the Gonzales Planning Area is primarily flat. The only change in topography occurs at Gonzales Slough which runs through the center of town.

b. Seismicity. The Planning Area is located in a region that is seismically active. The San Andreas Fault, which has the greatest potential for activity, lies approximately 11 miles northeast of the town. The King City Fault lies approximately four miles west of the City. The San Andreas Fault has the potential to produce an earthquake similar to the great earthquake of 1906 (8.3 Richter magnitude). Future large earthquakes on these regional active faults could be expected to produce major groundshaking intensities in the vicinity. It has been estimated that the maximum likely earthquake in a 50-year period along the Santa Cruz-San Benito section of the San Andreas Fault will have a Richter magnitude of 7.0 to 8.0.[5]

The City lies within Geotechnical Evaluation Zones II and IV of the Monterey County Seismic Safety Map.[6] Seismic risk to property is characterized on this map as being moderate to high due to the proximity of the City to the active San Andreas and King City fault zones and to the characteristics of the underlying material. Figure 13 shows the general locations of the seismic hazard zones within and around the City, including the City's wastewater treatment facility to the west. These maps are general in nature and do not necessarily characterize the actual condition on a specific site. Therefore, Community Health and Safety Policy 1.2 of the General Plan requires new development in areas of moderately or very high seismic hazards (as shown in Figure 13) to assess the extent of these hazards in accordance with State guidelines and incorporate mitigation measures which reduce them. To implement this policy under Action 1.2, soils reports would be required for development proposals in areas with moderately or very high seismic risks, or where soil stability is an issue. Additionally, under Action 1.3, geotechnical reports by a State-registered geologist would be required for major development proposals on sites within 500 feet of the Gonzales Slough and/or sites with very high seismic risks.

Because the Planning Area is located in an alluvium-filled valley, the ground responds strongly to seismic waves generated by an earthquake.[7]

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[5] M. Jacobs & Associates, May 1991.

[6] Breckoland & Associates, 1975.

[7] William Spangle & Associates. *County-wide Seismic Safety Element for Monterey County,* July 1975.

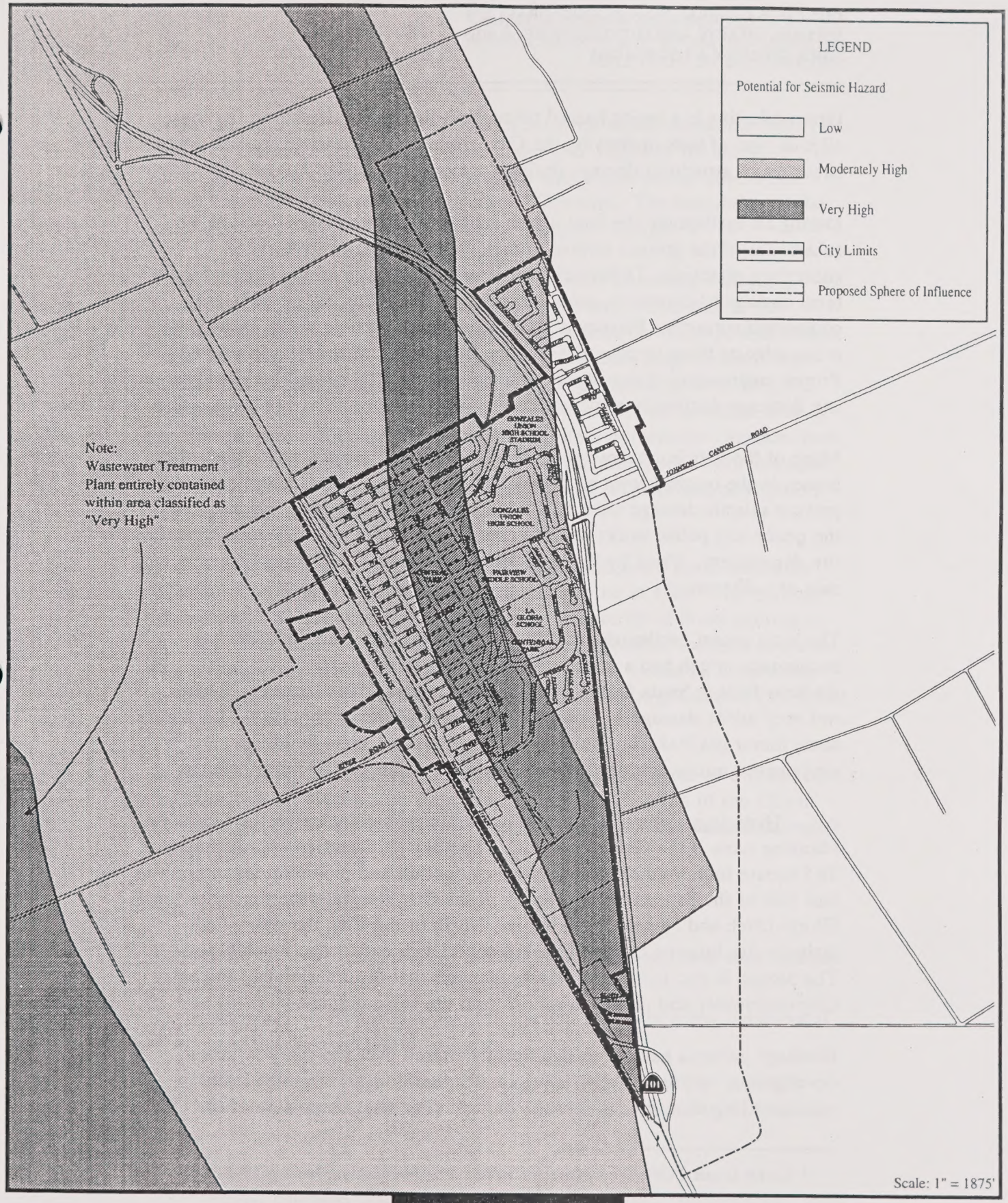

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FIGURE 13
Seismic Hazard Zones

Source: Central Valley Area Plan, 1987
Note: All boundaries are approximate and are based on generalized information.

Groundshaking is a major hazard throughout the valley. Based on the loose alluvial type of soils underlying the City, groundshaking can be anticipated to cause major structural damage during a major earthquake.

During an earthquake the land is also subject to differential settlement, or subsidence of the ground surface to unequal levels due to the type of subsurface materials. Differential settlement may cause immediate and long-term damage to structures, such as cracking and shifting, unless soils are compacted correctly. Placement of structures in such potentially hazardous areas subjects them to potential damage from differential ground settlement. Proper engineering of structures and engineering of fill placed for construction can decrease damage to structures.

Much of the City is constructed within zones of high seismic risk. Most of the homes in the original town were built before seismic hazards and means to prevent seismic damage were fully understood. The City Hall, which houses the police and public works departments, is also in the high risk zone as is the fire department. The City Hall has been designated as the command center in case of a disaster.

The most recent earthquake to affect the City was the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, which had a magnitude of 7.1 and an epicenter on the San Andreas fault in Santa Cruz County about 50 miles from Gonzales. There was very minor damage in Gonzales as a result of the earthquake. There were some minor gas leaks, but no sewer or water leaks. Some buildings experienced minor cracking and one house experienced structural damage.[8]

c. Hydrology. The main stormwater drainage facility within the Gonzales Planning Area is the Gonzales Slough. The Slough drains an approximately 29.5 square mile watershed area of valley, foothill and mountain terrain on the east side of the Salinas Valley. South of the City, the watershed includes the Gloria Ditch and Herold Ditch basins. North of the City, the watershed includes the Johnson Canyon Creek, Fanoe Ditch and Drake Ditch basins.[9] The Slough is also fed by man-made channels that drain farmlands and carry City stormwater and irrigation runoff from the surrounding areas.

Drainage patterns have been significantly altered over the years by urban development and agricultural operations in the Slough's watershed, and by accompanying channelization of the Slough. The western portion of the City

[8] Carlos Lopez, Public Works Director, personal communication, January 1991

[9] John Carollo Engineers, *City of Gonzales Drainage Slough Study*, 1986.

drains to the North Alta Street Ditch which travels north along Alta Street to meet the Gonzales Slough as it passes under U.S. Highway 101 north of Gonzales. The southwestern portion of the City drains to the South Alta Street Ditch and flows to farmland west of Gonzales. The remainder of the area within the City drains directly to the Gonzales Slough.

The Gonzales Slough passes through culverts at the Monterey Vineyard, Centennial Drive, Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Seventh Street and at the Gonzales High School. With the exception of Monterey Vineyard and Fourth Street culverts, all of the culverts are too small to carry large storm flows. The Slough's capacity, therefore, is limited to approximately 40 to 50 cubic feet per second (cfs) without flooding. To avoid additional overland flow to the Slough, recent commercial and residential developments in Gonzales have been required to provide on-site detention or retention ponds. For example, the Arroyo Estates and Sunrise Ranch Residential projects east of Highway 101 have holding basins.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency conducted a flood insurance study for Gonzales in 1981,[10] which was later updated in 1989. The purpose of the study was to investigate the existence and severity of flood hazards in the City. The study includes maps which show the possible location of areas that would be flooded as a result of a 100-year flood. Probable flood areas include both sides of Gonzales Slough and areas bordering Johnson Creek and Associated Road, as shown on Figure 14.

In addition to flooding from storm flows, flooding could occur as a result of the failure of the Nacimiento Reservoir about 60 miles south of the City in northern San Luis Obispo County. Figure 14 also shows the area of potential inundation resulting from the failure of the dam.

2. Criteria of Significance

The following CEQA criteria were used to determine significant soils, seismic and hydrological impacts of the General Plan.

- The General Plan would result in the conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural land uses.
- The General Plan would result in a substantial increase in geologic hazards, exposing people and/or structures to major seismic hazards.

[10] Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Insurance Administration. *Flood Insurance Study, City of Gonzales, Monterey County,* May 1981.

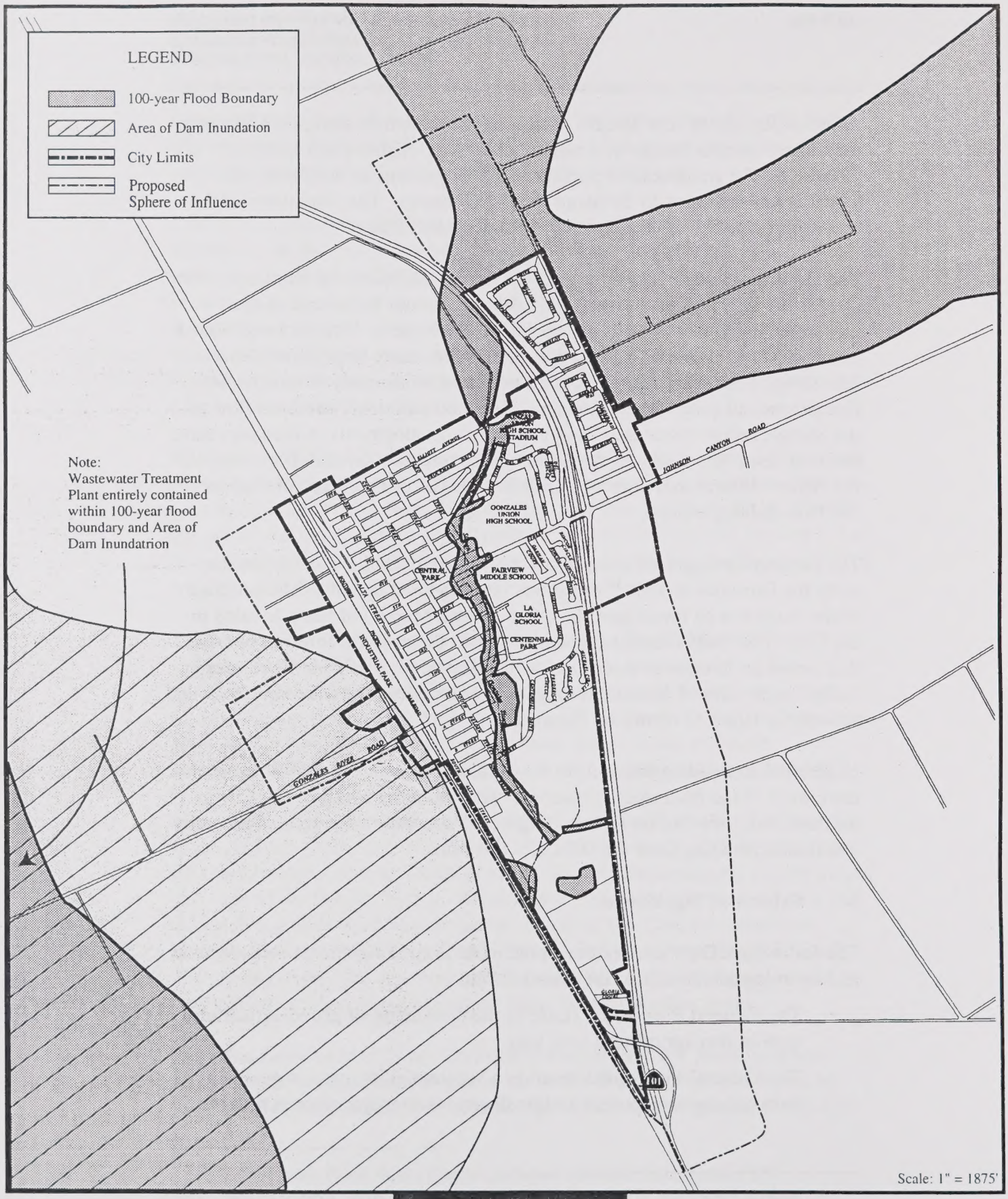

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FIGURE 14
Flood Hazard Zones

Source: Flood Insurance Rate Map: 1986, 1989
Central Salinas Valley Plan, 1987

- The General Plan would result in substantial flooding.
- The General Plan would substantially degrade water quality.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have significant adverse impacts according to the criteria given above.

a. Soils and Topography. There are no areas adjacent to the City limits that are not prime agricultural soils or soils of statewide significance.

Activities associated with development allowed under the General Plan could lead to erosion and loss of topsoil unless appropriate care is taken to prevent such impacts. Excavation and other site preparation work in advance of new construction could expose soils to wind and/or water erosion, depending on the season and degree of precipitation and wind.

Policy 5.1 of the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element requires that minimal erosion and loss of topsoil must occur with new development. Soils should be protected to avoid siltation of the Slough and to maintain its capability to support landscaping, gardens, and other productive uses.

The Land Use and Public Policy section of this chapter also points out that conversion of prime farmlands to urban uses would remain a significant and unavoidable impact.

b. Seismicity. Areas designated for Low and Medium Density Residential housing are shown on the Land Use Diagram within an area of very high seismic risk. Other Mixed Residential areas and Downtown Mixed uses shown on the Land Use Diagram have a moderately high potential for seismic hazard.

If Policies 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 in the Community Health and Safety Element of the General Plan are adopted as proposed, no significant seismic impacts would result from the Plan. Community Health and Safety Policies require new development to be seismically sound; require new development in areas of moderately or very high seismic hazard to assess the extent of the hazards in accordance with State guidelines and incorporate mitigation measures; require the upgrading of unreinforced masonry buildings as part of any renovation, remodeling or change of use; and encourage the upgrading of existing structures. A geotechnical investigation is required for major development proposals in locations with a moderately high or very high

potential for seismic hazard. A soils report is required for all development in these areas. A structural engineer would then be required to review the seismic data to determine whether the minimum Uniform Building Code (UBC) criteria would be adequate, or if additional project specific mitigation measures should be included as part of the project.

c. Hydrology.

(1) Flooding. If the polices in the General Plan are adopted as proposed, no significant environmental impact from flooding would result from the Plan. Policies 2.1 through 2.7 of the Community Health and Safety Element address the goal of reducing the risk of personal injury, loss of life, and damage to property resulting from floods. Policy 2.1 prohibits development within the 100-year flood zone of Gonzales Slough unless the project incorporates measures which mitigate 100-year flood hazards to habitable structures. An example of future development within the 100-year flood zone is a portion of the Anderson Ranch property located east of Highway 101 and north of Sunrise Ranch. Future development that falls within the flood zone will be required to mitigate potential flood hazards through drainage improvements, stormwater retention basins, elevated structures above the flood plain, and other measures as outlined in Community Health and Safety Policies 2.1 through 2.7 However, it is important to not only consider on-site flood hazards, but also the increased potential for downstream flooding. When earth fill is used to elevate structures above the flood plain, water is sometimes displaced and may flood other areas or cause runoff to enter Gonzales Slough more rapidly and increase flooding behind undersized culverts. A combination of retention and detention basins should be used to hold stormwater, as outlined in Polices 2.1 through 2.7. Under Policy 2.4, flood control measures along Gonzales Slough which protect riparian habitat values and incorporate provisions for recreation should be encouraged.

To implement Policies 2.1 through 2.7, the City should follow action programs 2.1 through 2.5 of the Community Health and Safety Element. Under Action 2.1, the City should require proponents of new development to prepare hydraulic storm drainage studies calculating the net increase in storm water runoff resulting from construction. Drainage improvements which mitigate these impacts should be required. Under Action 2.3, projects should be included in the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Program which cover the expansion of the box culvert under Fanoe Road and the culverts along Gonzales Slough.

(2) Urban/Industrial Runoff. To address a potential increase in urban and industrial runoff pollutants into the drainage system, such as Gonzales Slough, and the groundwater system, the General Plan contains policies and implementing actions in the Community Health and Safety, and Community Facilities and Services Elements. These policies would require the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) in the design and construction of new development. Under the Community Facilities and Services Element, Policy 4.2 states that the use of on-site detention basins where stormwater cannot be safely or efficiently conveyed to drainage ditches or the Gonzales Slough during peak runoff periods should be promoted. Policy 4.3 of the same Element states that the use of porous materials (e.g., porous asphalt, bricks, gravel, modular paving, and lattice blocks with soil and grass) to reduce the volume of runoff should be encouraged. Under Implementing Action 4.4 of the Community Facilities and Services Element, the City should consider requirements for monitoring stormwater runoff from developments with potentially hazardous materials or high concentrations of surface water pollutants (e.g., pavement oil, grease); and requiring filtration systems in retention basins which ensure that such pollutants do not reach the groundwater. Additionally, Policy 7.4 of the Community Health and Safety Element addresses measures that would trap or remove potential pollutants from urban runoff before they reach Gonzales Slough.

If the General Plan's policies are adopted as proposed, the General Plan would not result in a substantial degradation to water quality in the Gonzales Slough as a result of urban and industrial runoff. The water service subsection of the Infrastructure and Municipal Services subchapter of this EIR also addresses the issue of groundwater quality.

F. Biotic Factors

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1. Existing Setting

a. Planning Area. Plant and wildlife habitats of the Gonzales Planning Area are almost identical to habitats of the Central Salinas Valley. The Salinas Valley was historically a predominantly grassland area prior to its settlement and cultivation. Intensive agriculture and grazing have eliminated most of the native habitat; only isolated traces of native plant and animal habitat remain.

A variety of bird and small mammal species have adapted to the agricultural landscape of the Planning Area and greater Central Salinas Valley. Some of the fields provide habitat for rabbits, mice, gophers, doves, pheasants, and passerine birds.[1]

Street trees, parks, and private yards provide supplemental habitat for birds and smaller mammals. Most of the older neighborhoods west of Highway 101 have mature trees, providing habitat for birds.

b. Gonzales Slough. Gonzales Slough is a riparian zone which runs through the center of the City. Riparian plant communities provide a habitat for a variety of wildlife species, and help maintain streambank stability and stream configuration. Although few wildlife species live solely in riparian habitats, many species depend biologically on these areas. Riparian zones provide important refuge areas and many insects that are important food sources for other animals live entirely in or near riparian habitats. The Gonzales Slough riparian area also supports ladybird beetles, red-winged blackbirds, kildeer, and California ground squirrels.

Alders, willows and cottonwoods were probably common along the Slough in the past. However, building and modification of the Slough has almost entirely eliminated these native trees and replaced them with introduced plant species. The vegetation now remaining along the slough includes grasses and low growing species, including fat hen, mule fat, fescue grass, ripgut grass, sweet fennel, barnyard foxtail, perennial rye, bird's foot trefoil, cheeseweed, pineapple weed, rabbit's foot grass, wild radish, curly dock, dock, Russian

[1] Passerine birds are primarily small to medium-sized songbirds.

Thistle, California tule, common groundsel, common sow thistle, green alga, narrow leaved cattail, and spiny clotbur.[2]

Riparian areas are extremely sensitive to development. For example, activities which result in changes in water flow through creek channels increase the frequency of flooding.

2. Criteria of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project will normally have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it will interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish and wildlife species or substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have a significant adverse impact on plants and wildlife according to the CEQA criteria stated above.

a. Planning Area. The development of agricultural land could interfere with the movement of some non-listed species which have adapted to an agricultural setting. However, since large agricultural areas designated for development would remain adjacent to undeveloped agricultural areas, the proposed Plan would not interfere substantially with their movement.

Policies and implementing actions contained in the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element address the issue of protecting existing plant and animal habitat in the City and surrounding Planning Area from future urban development. Implementing Action 3.1 requires the City to use the environmental review process in preparing future site-specific surveys that identify species on potential development sites and to propose mitigation, as appropriate. Additionally, Policy 3.2 addresses the need to plant street trees in the City's parks and along public rights-of-ways to provide urban habitat for birds and animals.

Cumulative impacts to biological resources could result from continued urban development that encroaches on agricultural lands if urban expansion continues in the Central Salinas Valley beyond the horizon year of the

[2] Denise Duffy & Associates, *Draft Environmental Impact Report of LDL Investments Produce, Shipping and Processing Facility,* November 1991.

General Plan. However, the Monterey County General Plan, Central Salinas Valley Area Plan, and LAFCO policies intended to protect agricultural lands should serve to mitigate the effects of urban development on biological resources.

The General Plan would not have any significant impacts on the biotic resources of the Gonzales Planning Area. Policies and implementing actions contained within the Plan ensure that plant and animal species would be further enhanced and protected from future development.

b. Gonzales Slough. If the policies of the General Plan are adopted as proposed, there would also be no significant impacts on the plant and animal species found in the riparian areas along Gonzales Slough. Policies in the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element specifically address the goal of conserving the Slough as an ecological, recreational and flood control resource. Policy 2.1 requires the maintenance of the Slough as a permanent open space by retaining and restoring vegetation along its banks wherever feasible. Encroachment of development into the Slough's riparian areas should be minimized. Policy 2.2 addresses the enhancement of the Slough as habitat for local plants and animals if such enhancement does not impede its function for flood control and recreation.

In addition to policies that specifically address the protection of Gonzales Slough for it riparian values, the General Plan contains policies that protect and preserve the Slough as a flood control resource. The protection of the Slough from flooding impacts will directly affect plant and wildlife living along the banks of the Slough. These policies are contained in the Community Health and Safety Element and are discussed in the Soils, Geology, and Hydrology, and Infrastructure and Municipal Services sections (E and K, respectively) of this chapter.

G. Cultural Resources

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1. Existing Setting

a. Archaeological Resources. Gonzales is located on level terrain about two miles east of the Salinas River and along the Gonzales Slough, an associated tributary watercourse. These features made the site very desirable for prehistoric people as a location for habitation and resource processing. The entire Salinas Valley was occupied for thousands of years by ancestors of the Costanoan and Salinan peoples. The first people in the area were Costanoan native Americans, or Ohlone as they were later called. Although there is no written record of the Costanoans inhabiting Gonzales, the Gonzales environment would have been compatible with their lifestyles and habitat needs.

As a result of flooding in the valley and deposition of alluvium over the centuries, cultural resources may exist in Gonzales at depths which have not been disturbed by more recent agricultural activities. However, at this time, no known archaeological sites are located in Gonzales.

b. Historic Resources.

(1) City of Gonzales. The City's name comes from its Mexican heritage. Teodoro Gonzales, the *alcalde* (Mayor) of Monterey, received a land grant in 1836, which included the land on which the town is located. The "Rincon de la Punta del Monte," was a 15,128-acre grant of land. Teodoro Gonzalez' two sons, Alfred and Mariano, inherited the rancho and laid out its street system in 1874. The original town planned by the Gonzales brothers covered about 40 blocks. Streets running from north to south were named Alta, Belden, Day and Elko and those running from east to west started with First Street and extended to Tenth Street.

Phillip Collins, a man from County Cork, Ireland, built the first house in Gonzales in 1869. This house is still occupied and is located at the intersection of First and Center Streets. The Albina Brusa house, built in 1873, is also still standing and the Brusa family continues to live in Gonzales. A church was built in Gonzales in 1883, and schools were built in the 1870s and 1880s. Several commercial buildings from the early period can be seen along Fourth Street, including the Wells Fargo Bank. This building was

erected in 1917, and continues to be an important feature of the downtown streetscape.

The original street layout, historic homes and churches, and structures within the commercial area of the downtown play an essential role in the character and identity of Gonzales. The original streets of the town are on a grid pattern, with wide streets, and many of the storefronts in the downtown have an early 20th Century flavor.

Several historic buildings in the vicinity of downtown are still standing, including the Widemann home, the Community Church, the Brusa House, the Sneible and Tavernetti Building, the Boekengogan House, and the Parsons House. The majority of the historic buildings within the City limits are located within a rectangular area between First and Fifth Streets and between Alta Street and Gonzales Slough. The location of the historic resources within the City limits are shown in Figure 15.

(2) Planning Area. Settlers of varied cultural backgrounds established themselves in the area in order to work in the agriculture industry. Cattle raising was the predominant activity prior to the founding of the City of Gonzales in 1874. Hildreth and Dunphy leased the rancho lands prior to 1874. Grain raising become the primary agricultural activity in the 1880s. Beatty and Soomer were the most prominent threshing men in the 1890s. The next industry in the Gonzales Planning Area began when swiss dairy farmers migrated to the area and began to produce cheese in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In the 1920s, the dairy farms were gradually converted to row crop cultivation. Historically, Filipino field workers provided most of the field labor, but more recently, many Mexican laborers have come to Gonzales to work in the fields.

There are several potentially historic structures outside the City's central Historic District, including one outside the City limits and within the Planning Area. An abandoned building west of Alta Street and south of Gonzales River Road dating from 1907 was formerly the Alpine Milk Condensary, established by the originator of the condensed milk process. An additional structure outside the City limits and also west of Alta Street is believed to be the homesite of one of the sons of Teodoro Gonzales, the City's founder.

2. Criteria of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project will normally have a significant adverse effect if it meets the following criteria.

NORTH

SOURCE: Gonzales Centennial Book, 1974
Brady and Associates, 1995

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FIGURE 15
Existing Historic Resources

- The General Plan would disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site.
- The General Plan would disrupt or adversely affect a property of historic or cultural significance to a community, ethnic or social group.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Archaeological Resources. Development on vacant or agricultural land could potentially uncover archaeological resources. The Environmental Resources and Conservation Element contains the goal of protecting archaeological resources in the Gonzales Planning Area. Policy 4.1 requires the support of continued research on Native American settlements and calls for the protection of any discovered archaeological or paleontological resources. Implementing Action 4.1 requires investigations of proposed development sites for any potential archaeological resources.

If the noted policy of the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element is adopted and the implementing action is undertaken, development under the General Plan would not have a significant adverse impact on any potential archaeological resources in the Gonzales Planning Area.

The County has also established archaeological sensitivity zones of low, moderate and high, to indicate the probability of an archaeological site in each zone. The area in which Gonzales is located is designated as having a low sensitivity.

b. Historic Resources.

(a) City of Gonzales. The Community Character Element contains policies and implementing actions that address the goal of preserving the City's historic buildings, sites, and other historic resources. As required by Policy 7.1, the General Plan designates a Historic District, as shown in Figure 3, the Land Use Diagram. Under Community Character Implementing Action 7.1, the City will establish and maintain a priority listing of buildings and sites in the Historic District in cooperation with the Historic Preservation Commission of Gonzales. Establishing an Historic District and establishing and maintaining a priority listing of valuable buildings and sites would help preserve historic resources in two ways. These steps will serve to heighten the community's understanding of its historic resources and they will also encourage consideration of historic resources in light of the agreed upon priorities of the listing. Policy 7.2 encourages the preservation of historic buildings both within the proposed Historic District and the rest of the City.

If the policies of the Land Use and Community Character Element are adopted as proposed, the General Plan would not result in any significant adverse impact on the historic resources within Gonzales.

(b) Planning Area. General Plan policies do not specifically address the preservation of historic resources beyond the City limits and in the Planning Area. However, there would be no significant impacts on potential historic structures either within or outside of the proposed sphere of influence. Potentially historic structures outside of the existing City limits but within the City's proposed sphere of influence would be protected by policies should the City annex the area. Historic structures beyond the proposed sphere of influence, but within the Gonzales Planning Area, would be generally protected by the underlying land use designation of Agriculture in the proposed Gonzales General Plan and the Monterey County General Plan.

H. Hazardous Materials

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1. Existing Setting

a. Regulatory Framework. Handling of hazardous materials is regulated by several State and federal agencies. Commercial use and storage of hazardous materials is subject to the provisions of the California Occupational Health and Safety Act (CALOSHA), the Uniform Fire Code, the Uniform Building Code and other State and federal legislation. Transport of hazardous materials and wastes is regulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the California Highway Patrol Motor Carrier Division, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the State Department of Health Services (DOHS). The DOHS has designated counties as the enforcement agencies for many of the hazardous materials regulations.

The Monterey County Department of Environmental Health has regulatory authority over hazardous waste in Gonzales. Standards and procedures are developed for hazardous materials and each business that stores hazardous wastes is required to meet the standards and codes. For example, businesses that have acutely hazardous wastes are required to have a Risk Management Program. The Program addresses emergency procedures for containment and evacuation, employee training and an inventory program. In addition, any business handling hazardous materials is required to have a Business Response Plan. This includes employee training and addresses what procedures the business will use to contact the local City and fire department when any accident occurs. The City fire and police departments provide initial response services to the site in case of emergency.

The presence of hazardous materials can affect the siting of certain types of land uses.[1] The Department of Environmental Health recommends that land uses such as schools and residences be located at least 1,000 feet downwind of areas that have acute levels of hazardous materials.

b. Existing Hazardous Wastes.

(1) Industrial/Manufacturing. Several thousand pounds of hazardous materials are stored in several locations throughout Gonzales. The City itself stores motor oil, diesel fuel, paints, and pool maintenance chemicals, such as

[1] John Ramierez, personal communication.

chlorine and muriatic acid. Agricultural food processing plants use anhydrous ammonia for refrigeration in cold rooms. Chlorine is also used to produce a wash water in the form of sodium hydrochloride. Hydrochloric acid is used in the process of making wine. Tanks above and below ground at the Monterey Winery are used for the storage of hydrochloric acid.

(2) Agriculture. Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are used on some of the farms in the Gonzales Planning Area, including areas planned for eventual urban use under the General Plan. Some of these materials contain chemicals that are potentially harmful to human health and the environment.

(3) Residential. Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are also used by some residents within the City, although to a lesser degree than in commercial agriculture.

2. Criteria of Significance

The following criterion from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines was used to determine significant adverse impacts from hazardous materials.

- The use, production, disposal and transport of hazardous materials under the General Plan would pose a hazard to people, animal and plant populations in the Gonzales Planning Area.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have a significant adverse impact from hazardous materials, according to the criterion given above.

a. Industry/Manufacturing. Hazardous materials are commonly used in various industrial and manufacturing industries, as described in the Existing Settings section. The General Plan designates 193 vacant acres to be developed for industrial and manufacturing uses, including approximately 23 acres of undeveloped land within existing City limits.

The Existing Setting section discusses the County, State and federal laws that regulate the handling, storage and transport of hazardous materials. Community Health and Safety Element Policy 5.2 requires that the City support the County Hazardous Waste Management Program. Under Policy 5.3, Gonzales must implement State and County regulations regarding the storage, use, transport and handling of hazardous materials.

Policies in the Community Health and Safety Element specifically address the issue of ensuring the safety of Gonzales residents from hazardous materials. Under Policy 5.4, the City would regulate the transport of hazardous materials in residential areas to the extent permitted by law. Policy 5.5 requires that adequate and safe separation be provided between areas that use hazardous materials and non-compatible areas such as schools, residences, and public facilities. To implement these policies, Implementing Action 5.3 would site future schools, residences and public gathering places at least 1,000 feet downwind of areas that use and/or store significant quantities of hazardous materials. Under Implementing Action 5.2, the City would amend the Gonzales Hazardous Materials and Storage Ordinance to prohibit storage or use of hazardous materials within a 25-foot property line setback in industrial areas; prohibit the transport of acutely hazardous materials (chlorine gas, ammonia, sulfur dioxide gas) on all City streets east of Alta Street; and require a sanitary survey of the potential impact of hazardous materials from development on surface and groundwaters.

If policies and implementing actions are adopted as proposed, development under the General Plan would not pose a significant risk of hazardous materials exposure from industrial/manufacturing uses.

b. Agriculture. The City of Gonzales is surrounded by agricultural farmlands within and beyond the Planning Area. The General Plan designates land for future urban uses on existing farmland. Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are used on some of the farms in the Planning Area, including those areas designated for urban uses.

The General Plan contains policies that require sufficient buffers between agricultural farmland and urban uses, particularly residential neighborhoods. Policy 6.4 of the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element requires that new residential areas be situated away from farm activities which use chemical spraying and aerial applications. Buffers or transitional uses such as parking and roads should be placed between permanent agricultural areas and residential areas.

If the policies of the Land Use and Environmental Resources and Conservation Element are adopted as proposed, the General Plan would not pose a significant hazard on residents from adjacent agricultural uses. The policies ensure that there will be no significant impact.

I. Noise

■ ■ ■

1. Existing Setting

a. General Information on Noise. Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Airborne sound is formed by a rapid fluctuation of air pressure above and below atmospheric pressure. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels (dB) with nine dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing.

The effects of noise on people can be listed in three general categories:

- Subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, and dissatisfaction.
- Interference with activities such as speech, sleep, and learning.
- Physiological effects such as startling and hearing loss.

The levels associated with environmental noise, in almost every case, produce effects only in the first two categories. Workers in industrial plants and other noisy environments can experience noise in the last category. Unfortunately, there is no effective method of measuring the subjective effects of noise, or of the corresponding reactions of annoyance and dissatisfaction. This is primarily due to the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance, and habituation to noise as a result of differing individual past experiences with noise.

Most of the sounds that people hear in the environment do not consist of a single frequency differing in sound level. The intensities of each frequency combine to form a sound. The method commonly used to quantify environmental sounds consists of evaluating all of the frequencies of a sound in accordance with a weighing that reflects the fact that human hearing is less sensitive at low frequencies and extreme high frequencies than in the frequency mid-range. This is called "A" weighting, and the decibel level so measured is called the A-weighed sound level (dBA).

New noise is evaluated by comparing it to the existing noise environment, called the "ambient noise level". In general, the more a new noise exceeds the previously existing ambient noise level, the less acceptable the new noise will be judged by the hearers.

Changes in A-weighted noise level are perceptible as follows:

- Except in carefully controlled laboratory experiments, a change of one dB cannot be perceived.
- Outside of the laboratory, a three dB change is considered a just-perceivable difference.
- A change in level of at least five dB is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected.
- A 10 dB change is subjectively heard as approximately a doubling in loudness, and would almost certainly result in community response, recognizing an adverse change in their environment.

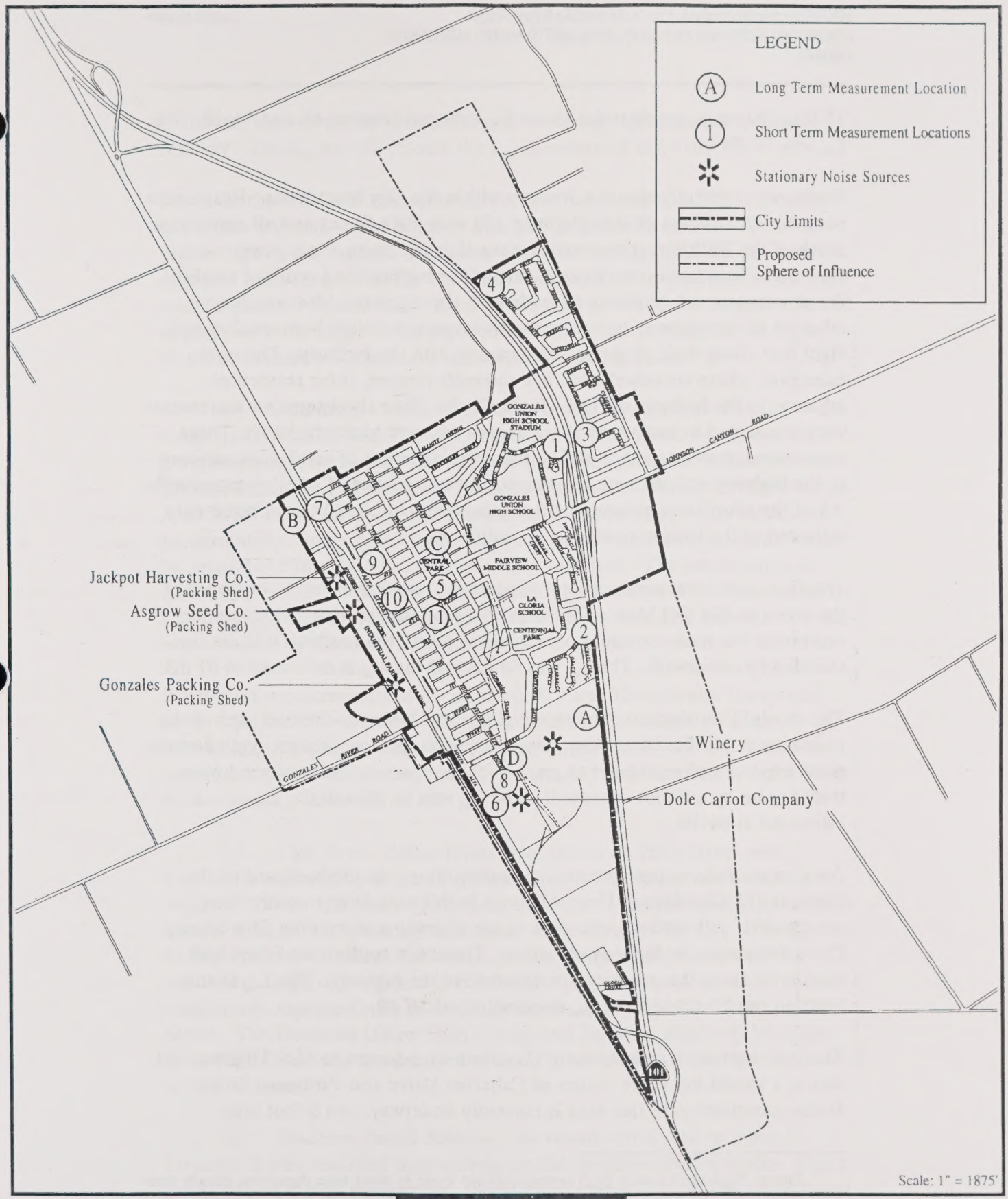
As related to traffic noise, three dB change in the noise level generated by traffic would be realized by a doubling or halving of the existing traffic volume. Thus, if traffic volume were to increase by double or decrease by half, a just-perceivable difference in noise level would be experienced.

b. Existing Noise Environment. The major noise sources in the City of Gonzales include traffic on U.S. Highway 101, Alta Road, and Fifth Street; trains on the Southern Pacific tracks; and operations at the Monterey Vineyard, the Dole Carrot Company, and three packing sheds.

Noise measurements were made in the City of Gonzales on March 18 and 19, 1992. Long-term and short-term measurements were done at representative locations throughout the City. All measurements were conducted with Larson-Davis Laboratories Model 700 sound level meters. The meters were fitted with Bruel & Kjaer 4176 pre-polarized condenser microphones. This microphone and meter assembly meets the American National Standards Institute standard for Type 1 (precision) sound level meter. The meters were calibrated prior to and after the measurements. The locations of the measurements conducted around the City are also shown in Figure 16. The following paragraphs describe in detail the results of the noise monitoring survey.

(1) Transportation Noise.

(a) Highway 101. Traffic from U.S. Highway 101 is the most significant noise source in the City of Gonzales. The highway is a four-lane divided facility within the City limits. Noise levels from traffic on U.S. Highway 101 were monitored over a 24-hour period (Location A). The meter was placed 67 feet from the centerline of the highway in a tree at a height of



NORTH

SOURCE: Illingworth and Rodkin, 1992

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FIGURE 16
Noise Measurement Locations
(March 1992)

12 feet. Average hourly noise levels (L_{eq}) ranged between 65 and 74 dB. The L_{dn} was 76 dB.[1]

Residences currently abut the freeway within the City boundaries. Residences near the interchange of U.S. Highway 101 with Fifth Street and all residences north of the Fifth Street overpass are significantly above the highway elevation. Residences on the west side of the highway and south of the Fifth Street overpass are generally at grade with the highway. Most residences adjacent to the highway have soundwalls ranging in height between five and eight feet along their property line common with the highway. The only exception, where soundwalls are not currently present, is for residences adjacent to the highway off Del Monte Circle. Four short-term measurements were conducted in backyards of residences adjacent to the highway. These measurements were used to define the noise exposure of residences adjacent to the highway and evaluate the acoustical performance of existing soundwalls. All of the short-term measurement results were correlated to the noise data collected at the long-term station (Location A).

The first short-term measurement (Location 1) was taken in the backyard of the home at 628 Del Monte Circle, overlooking the freeway. This location represents the noise exposure of residences above the roadway that are not shielded by soundwalls. The L_{eq} was 64 dB and the L_{dn} is estimated at 67 dB.

The second short-term measurement (Location 2) was in the backyard of the residence at 632 Freedom Way. Noise levels at this location are typical of the noise exposure of residences at grade with the freeway and protected from traffic noise by a 6-foot soundwall. The L_{eq} was 61 dB and the L_{dn} is estimated at 64 dB.

Another short-term measurement (Location 3) was in the backyard of the home at 555 Chardonnay Drive. Homes in this area have recently been constructed. All of the homes next to the highway and fronting Chardonnay Drive are above the highway elevation. There is a continuous 5-foot high soundwall along the property line adjacent to the highway. The L_{eq} at this location was 55 dB and the L_{dn} is estimated at 56 dB.

The last short-term measurement (Location 4), adjacent to U.S. Highway 101, was in a vacant lot at the corner of Cabernet Drive and Zinfandel Drive. Home construction in this area is currently underway. An 8-foot high

[1] Energy Equivalent Levels (L_{eq}) measure sound levels in short time durations, usually one-hour durations. Day-Night Average Levels (Ldn) are used to describe the average noise level during a 24-hour period,with a penalty of 10 dB for 10 PM - 7 AM noise.

soundwall has been constructed along the property line adjacent to the highway. The L_{eq} was 57 dB and the L_{dn} is estimated at 59 dB.

Based on the results of measurements conducted along U.S. Highway 101, residences adjacent to the highway that have soundwalls and are above the highway grade are exposed to noise levels below an L_{dn} of 60 dB, the noise exposure limit adopted by the Gonzales General Plan for residential outdoor noise exposure. Residences without soundwalls or with 6-foot soundwalls and at grade with the highway are exposed to noise levels in excess of an L_{dn} of 60 dB and would be considered impacted by highway noise.

(b) Alta Street. Noise levels from traffic on Alta Street were monitored over a 24-hour period (Location B). The meter was placed on a pole, at a height of 14 feet, and 123 feet from the centerline of Alta Street. The meter was also 45 feet from the centerline of the Southern Pacific tracks. Alta Street and train traffic was monitored at this location. The meter was programmed to identify the individual train passbys so that train noise could be separated from the noise of traffic on Alta Street. The contribution of Alta Street traffic to the noise environment at this location is estimated at an L_{dn} of 64 dB. Several residences along Alta Street would be exposed to noise levels similar to the levels measured at this location.

Short-term measurements at Locations 6, 7, 9 and 10 represent the typical noise exposure of residences adjacent to Alta Street. Based on data correlation between the long-term location (Location B) and the satellite locations, residences fronting Alta Street are currently exposed to noise levels between an L_{dn} of 64 and 66 dB.

(c) Fifth Street. Noise levels from traffic on Fifth Street were monitored over a 24-hour period (Location C). The meter was placed at a height of 12 feet in a tree at a distance of 40 feet from the centerline of Fifth Street. Fifth Street is a designated truck route through the City. The L_{dn} was 61 dB, which the General Plan states is only conditionally acceptable for residential neighborhoods and public facilities. Noise levels recorded at this location are representative of the noise exposure of residences fronting Fifth Street. The Gonzales Union High School and Fairview Middle School also front Fifth Street and are exposed to noise levels similar to the levels recorded at this location.

(d) Southern Pacific Railroad. As stated earlier, the monitor at Location B also recorded train activity on the Southern Pacific tracks. Eight trains passed during monitoring. Based on our observations, the trains travel at speeds in excess of 45 mph and train whistles are blown repeatedly as the

trains go through the City. Whistles typically generate maximum noise levels in excess of 100 dB at 50 feet. Based on the results of that measurement, the L_{dn} 100 feet from the tracks is estimated at 67 dB. Train noise is a significant noise issue for residences within 300 feet from the tracks.

(2) Industrial Noise. Industrial noise sources in the City of Gonzales consist of the Monterey Vineyard, the Dole Carrot Company, and several packing sheds along the west side of Alta Street. Each of these noise sources was visited and noise measurements were taken. The following paragraphs summarize the results of these measurements.

(a) Monterey Vineyard. The location of the winery is shown in Figure 16. Noise levels at the nearest homes adjacent to the winery were monitored for a period of 16 hours (Location D). The meter was placed in the backyard of the residence at 444 Belden Street, adjacent to the winery property. Winery equipment was located approximately 500 to 600 feet away from the monitor. The winery equipment includes pumps, motors and compressors, and operates around the clock as needed. Noise from the winery was clearly audible at the monitoring location and dominated background noise levels. Average hourly noise levels (L_{eq}) during the 16 hours of monitoring ranged between 46 and 54 dB. The L_{dn} at this location is estimated at 57 dB. Noise levels inside residences near the winery reached a peak L_{dn} of 42 dB with windows open, which would not generally interfere with indoor or outdoor activities at nearby residences. However, during the crushing season, the noise associated with trucks and the increased activity could be significant.

(b) Dole Carrot Company. Dole Company operates a carrot packing plant within the City of Gonzales. The plant is located adjacent to Alta Street and south of the Gonzales Slough. The exact location of the plant is shown in Figure 16. Noise sources at the plant consist of an outdoor conveyor system, rooftop fans, truck traffic entering and exiting the plant, and a public announcement (PA) system used for internal paging. Noise levels from the plant were monitored at two locations (Locations 6 and 8). Both monitoring locations represent typical setbacks of existing apartment units and mobile homes nearest to the plant.

Noise levels recorded at Location 6 are representative of the noise exposure of the apartments adjacent to the plant and fronting Alta Street. Operational noise from the plant is not significant as it does not exceed maximum noise levels, as shown in Table 9. Traffic on Alta Street dominates the noise environment. The PA speaker used at the plant generated maximum noise levels between 60 and 65 dB, and individual words are clearly audible.

However, the PA system is used infrequently, and the speaker is not directed toward the apartments.

Noise levels recorded at Location 8 represent the noise exposure of apartments and mobile homes adjacent to the plant but removed from Alta Street traffic noise. Background noise levels at this location are low. When the plant is operating, noise levels become noticeably elevated, but with an L_{eq} of 58 dB with the plant running, plant noise still remains below the 60 dB threshold for residential exposure. Outside plant noise is estimated at an L_{dn} between 60 and 64 dB. The plant noise is mostly from operation of the conveyor system and the rooftop fans.

(c) Packing Sheds. Packing sheds in the City are used for collection and packaging of agricultural products produced nearby. The packing sheds are located next to the Southern Pacific tracks and Alta Street. Their locations are shown in Figure 16. Activity levels at the sheds were low since this is an off peak time of the year. Increased truck traffic during the peak of the packing season would be the primary cause of packing shed related noise.

Noise emanating from two packing sheds, the Jackpot Packing Company and Asgrow Seed Company was monitored (Locations 9 and 10). The Jackpot Packing Company (packing shed) generated a steady noise level of 53 to 57 dB at the nearest residence setback fronting Alta Street. Noise of traffic on Alta Street was significantly higher than the noise generated at the Packing Shed. During peak periods of operation, packing shed noise could be significantly higher. More truck traffic on the street would also be anticipated during the peak of the season.

The Asgrow Seed Company (packing shed) is located on Figure 16 (Location 10). Packing shed related noise, at the nearest residences to the shed and fronting Alta Street, was minimal. Their noise environment was dominated by traffic on Alta Street. Noise from the shed would not be significant, even during peak operating times.

Noise measurements were not taken at the Gonzales Packing Company (packing shed). However, based on measurements conducted at the two other sheds, shed noise would not be considered significant. Even during peak periods of activity, it is anticipated that increased truck traffic on Alta Street would dominate the noise environment at residences nearest the sheds.

2. Criteria of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project will normally have a significant effect on the environment if it will increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would result in significant noise impacts based on the criterion stated above.

Policy 8.3 of the Community Health and Safety Element requires the city to follow the land use compatibility standards for noise shown in Table 9. These standards have been developed in accordance with guidelines published by the California Department of Health Services, Office of Noise Control. They identify the levels of noise which are compatible with activities common in different land use categories. Recommended interior noise levels reflect the levels of sound required to carry out normal activities in each of the specified types of space.

Table 9 identifies three separate levels of standards for noise exposure normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, and normally unacceptable.

- **Normally Acceptable** noise levels are those which pose no threat to the specified use. Standard construction techniques would reduce external noise so that the interior noise level would not disrupt activities.
- **Conditionally Acceptable** noise levels are those in which standard building construction would not be adequate to protect the land use. However, standard mitigation measures such as noise barriers, site design to protect sensitive uses, architectural design to protect noise sensitive activities, or acoustical insulation, could be easily employed to achieve acceptable sound levels.
- **Normally Unacceptable** noise levels are those for which simple mitigation measures would not be adequate. The specified land uses would not be appropriate in these areas unless major noise attenuation measures have been designed into the projects by a professional who is competent in sound reduction and unless a detailed noise study has been conducted to assure the performance of the design. Construction of the specified use should be strongly discouraged in areas with these levels.

Table 9
NOISE AND LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Land Use Category	Recommended Maximum Noise Levels, dB (L_{dn})			
	Interior	Exterior		
		Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable
Residential				
Low Density	45	<60[a]	60-70[a]	>70
Medium/High Density	45	<60[a]	60-75[a]	>75
Commercial				
Motel	45	<60	60-75	>75
Office	50	<65	65-80	>80
Restaurant/Retail	50	<70	70-80	>80
Industrial				
Light Industrial	--	<70	70-80	>80
Manufacturing	--	<70	70-80	>80
Public/Quasi-Public				
School, Library, Church, Hospital, Theater	45	<60	60-75	>75
Open Space	--	<70	70-80	>80

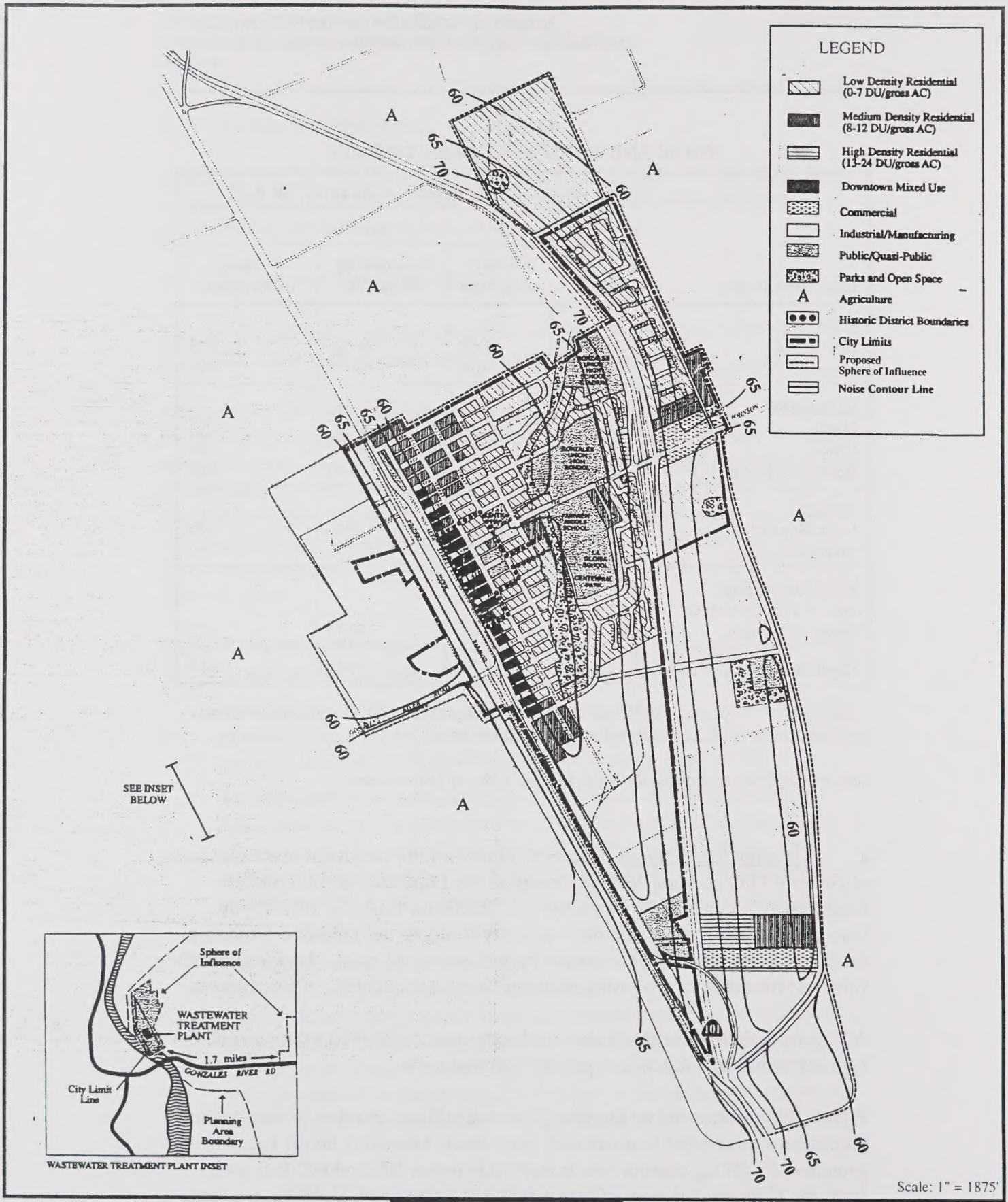
[a] Policy 8.4 of the Community Health and Safety Element requires that a maximum exterior noise level of 60 dB (L_{dn}) be maintained in residential areas.

Source: California Department of Health Services, Office of Noise Control.

a. Transportation Noise. Figure 17 illustrates the projected noise contours at General Plan buildout in 2015, based on the Land Use and Circulation Diagrams (Figures 3 and 9 respectively). Traffic on Highway 101, largely beyond the City's control and not a primary result of the proposed Gonzales General Plan, will continue to be the biggest source of noise. Increased traffic volumes will result in increasing noise levels along both sides of the highway.

A larger number of existing homes and some new residential areas east of the highway would be subjected to greater highway noise.

Figure 17 indicates that by the year 2015, a significant number of existing and planned residences fall in areas with noise levels exceeding 60 dB L_{dn}. The projected 65 dB L_{dn} contour line is located between 500 and 600 feet away from the Highway 101 right-of-way whereas the projected 70 dB L_{dn} is about 250 feet away from the highway right-of-way. Noise levels along Alta Street



SOURCE: Illingworth and Rodkin, 1992

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FIGURE 17
Noise Contours (Ldn)
Year 2015

will also rise. Figure 17 shows noise levels in excess of 60 dB L_{dn} within one-block east of Alta Street.

However, if the policies of the Community Health and Safety Element area adopted, noise levels would be reduced to less than significant levels. Policy 8.5 requires site planning and architectural design such as insulation in areas adjacent to Highway 101 and Alta Street, in order to reduce the exposure of sensitive land uses such as residential uses to noise. Policy 8.8 requires sound walls, berms or other noise-reducing designs to reduce noise levels from Highway 101 to adjacent residential developments.

Policies also address noise levels along other streets in Gonzales. Policy 8.9 of the Community Health and Safety Element discourages truck traffic on Fifth Street and other residential streets to reduce noise levels in residential areas. The corresponding Implementing Action 8.4 recommends that the City Ordinance 10.32 be amended so that Fifth Street is no longer a designated route.

b. Industrial Noise. Figure 17 does not project noise levels at General Plan buildout in 2015 from industrial and manufacturing uses due to the uncertainty of the future locations and types of industries. However, based on buildout of all the designated Industrial/Manufacturing areas, noise levels from industries would undoubtedly rise.

The Community Health and Safety Element contains policies that would reduce noise levels from industrial sources to less than significant levels, thereby eliminating any potential impacts on adjacent sensitive land uses. Policy 8.2 discourages noise-sensitive uses such as hospitals or rest homes from locating in areas with high stationary source noise levels. Conversely, new stationary uses with high noise levels such as warehouses and heavy industries would be prohibited or discouraged from locating near noise-sensitive uses. Policy 8.5 requires site planning and architectural design for sensitive land uses housing from high noise-level areas such as the industrial area west of Alta Street. Implementing Action 8.7 would require new industrial and manufacturing uses that are close to existing or future residential areas to demonstrate compliance with the noise standards of Table 9 prior to project approval. Additionally, Implementing Action 8.8 would require new noise-sensitive development, such as residences, near existing stationary noise sources to incorporate design measures that would bring interior and exterior noise levels down in compliance with noise standards.

c. Construction Noise. Construction of new projects or redevelopment of existing buildings could potentially result in substantial increases in noise levels in areas immediately surrounding the construction sites. The potential for significant construction noise impacts will be greatest where new construction is proposed near existing residential land uses or along less congested roadways (where ambient noise levels are lower). Typical construction noise levels generated by individual pieces of construction equipment could exceed 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the source. Potential construction noise impacts would be limited to the immediate neighbors of each construction site.

The Community Health and Safety Element contains Implementing Action 8.6 which recommends the modification of existing ordinances or adoption of a new ordinance to address construction noise. The Action calls for the ordinance to include "specific standards for construction noise". In addition, evaluation of potential construction period noise impacts of specific development projects would best be undertaken at the time such projects are proposed.

J. Air Quality

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1. Existing Setting

a. Climate. The Gonzales Planning Area is located within the North Central Coast Air Basin. The basin includes Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties. The North Central Coast Air Basin is influenced by both a marine climate and a continental climate. In a marine climate, cool winds from the coast flow inland to the warmer environment. The maritime winds carry pollutants created by traffic and industry located in the more heavily populated coastal area to the Salinas Valley and Gonzales. The surrounding mountains trap the air within the Valley. During the winter months when it is cooler inland, the effects of the maritime influence decrease and the characteristics of a continental climate prevail. Warm air rises from the soil and air quality is influenced more by activity in the immediate vicinity of the City.

b. Air Quality.

(1) Emissions. Sources of pollutants include emissions from industrial and vehicular uses. Motor vehicles are the largest anthropogenic (man-made) source of gaseous pollutants in the Salinas valley. Carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons comprise the basic category of air pollutants emitted from automobiles. Carbon monoxide is highly poisonous; nitrogen oxides are also poisonous, but not nearly to the extent of carbon monoxide. Nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons produce photochemical smog under the action of sunlight. Though emissions from a particular car may not seem significant, the cumulative volume from many vehicles creates a substantial pollution potential.

The extent of dispersion of materials emitted into the atmosphere is primarily a function of the wind and inversion conditions. Inversion layers are present in the Gonzales area during the spring, summer and fall months. The on-flow winds that frequently move up the valley tend to prevent the dispersion of an inversion layer out through the mouth of the valley. At this location, therefore, winds have the potential to move pollutants up the valley where they can accumulate under the inversion layer.

(2) Air Quality Standards. Air quality is governed by the Federal Clean Air Act of 1990 which is administered by the Environmental Protection Agency at the federal level. The State of California Air Resources Board has been delegated authority under the Federal Clean Air Act to prepare plans for the air basins under its jurisdiction. In addition, the State Air Resources Board implements the California Clean Air Act.

Both the State and federal laws require that Monterey County attain certain air quality standards as shown in Table 10. A plan must be prepared by the local agency, the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD), indicating how the standards will be met. An Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) was prepared by MBUAPCD in 1991 for the area which includes the City of Gonzales and the Planning Area. The Plan recommends emission reduction strategies for stationary sources and transportation and sets a schedule for compliance.

The ambient air quality standards are important for the General Plan process because the planned growth that exceeds AMBAG growth forecasts in the 1994 Air Quality Management Plan could jeopardize regional attainment of the ozone standard. Further, future traffic congestion hotspots from planned growth could result in localized exceedances of air quality standards for carbon monoxide.[1]

The National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone has been exceeded in the past in Monterey County, and thus the air basin in which Gonzales is located has been designated as a nonattainment area for ozone. The closest MBUAPCD air monitoring station, located in Salinas, has not recorded violations of either State or federal ozone standards since 1989. However, the National Park Service operates a closer station at the Pinnacles. There have been recorded exceedances of the State ozone standard at the Pinnacles for several years.[2]

2. Criteria of Significance

The following criterion from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines was used to determine significant air quality impacts.

[1] Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, Comment letter to *Gonzales General Plan Draft EIR,* January 29, 1996.

[2] Ibid.

Table 10
AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard		Federal Standard			
				Primary[a]		Secondary[b]	
		ppm	$\mu g/m^3$	ppm	$\mu g/m^3$	ppm	$\mu g/m^3$
Ozone (O_3)[c]	1 hour	>0.09	180	0.12	240	0.12	240
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 hours	>9	10,000	9	10,000	9	10,000
	1 hour	>20	23,000	35	40,000	35	40,000
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Annual			0.053	100	0.053	100
	1 hour	0.25	470				
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Annual			0.03	80		
	24 hours	0.04	105	0.14	365		
	3 hours					0.05	1,300
	1 hour	>0.25	655				
Inhalable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})[d]	Annual	30			50		50
	24 hours		50		150		150

[a] Designed to protect human health.
[b] Designed to protect public welfare (i.e., to prevent damage to vegetation, property and visibility.
[c] California standard is for oxidant measured as ozone.
[d] Standards for TSP have been replaced by PM_{10} standards.

- The General Plan would violate ambient air quality standards, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have significant impacts on air quality according to the CEQA criterion stated above.

a. MBUAPCD Air Quality Management Plan. Buildout of the General Plan is likely to contribute to an exceedance of ambient air quality standards due to increased industrial and transportation emissions. As part of preparing the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and determining whether cumulative growth within the planning area will result in violations of State air quality standards, the MBUAPCD utilizes AMBAG population projections to calculate cumulative growth in ozone-forming emissions.

The *1994 Air Quality Management Plan for the North Central Coast Air Basin* (AQMP) concluded that growth under local General Plans in place in 1994 would result in air quality violations. To the extent a new General Plan allows

increased development, that growth would raise the potential for air quality violations. The General Plan designates enough land to accommodate a buildout population of 11,578 persons in 2015. With a potential population growth of over 6,100 persons in the 20-year planning period, MBUAPCD would conclude that the General Plan is not consistent with the *1994 Air Quality Management Plan*.

Impact AIR-1. Increased transportation and industrial emissions would contribute to the region's existing violation of air quality standards. Any increase in development from that projected in the current General Plan would lead to inconsistency with the MBUAPCD Air Quality Management Plan, and contribute to the region's existing exceedance of air quality standards. (S)

Although the City of Gonzales requested on February 24, 1994 that AMBAG include the General Plan population buildout estimate in the AMBAG official forecasts for the City, AMBAG staff did not incorporate this request. AMBAG will revise the official forecasts to reflect the adoption of the City of Gonzales General Plan during its next update of the regional population and employment forecasts scheduled for the next fiscal year.

Policies, and implementing actions contained in the General Plan address the goal of reducing impacts to the region's air quality. Community Health and Safety Policies 6.1 through 6.5 address measures to reduce levels of pollutant emissions into the air. Policy 6.2 encourages a land use and transportation pattern which would reduce dependency on the single passenger vehicle. The Circulation Element also contains policies and implementing actions that would provide alternatives to single passenger vehicles. Circulation Policy 6.5 requires the City to actively promote ridesharing and carpooling programs for residents working within and outside of the City. Policies 7.1 through 7.6 address the goal of providing better provisions for bicyclists and pedestrians. Under Implementing Action 7.1, the City should develop a Gonzales Bikeways Master Plan within two years of the adoption date of the General Plan.

The General Plan also contains policies that address the reduction of emissions from other sources, primarily industries and construction-related activities. Policy 6.3 of the Community Health and Safety Element requires mitigation measures for new development, such as industries, which could result in a significant increase in air pollution. Under Implementing Action 6.6, the City should require and enforce dust emissions control plans for construction activities; plans would include regular watering during earthmoving and excavation, covering piles of exposed soil, and sealing new roads as soon as possible.

Mitigation Measure AIR-1. Adopt and implement General Plan policies and action programs that would reduce emissions from automobiles, industries, and construction-related activities.

Although policies and action programs in the General Plan attempt to minimize air quality impacts, they will be insufficient to decrease levels that would comply with the MBUAPCD Air Quality Management Plan, particularly if buildout is reached by 2015. Therefore, the impact on air quality remains significant and unavoidable. (SU)

b. Construction-Related Emissions. Construction activities would generate pollutant emissions of various degrees in the City of Gonzales. While construction activities and their associated emissions would vary for each project, the types and sources of construction emissions would be similar among projects and land uses.

Emissions associated with project construction would likely be generated by construction workers traveling to and from the construction sites, heavy duty construction equipment, and fugitive dust from earthmoving activities. The additional movement of vehicles to and from construction sites coupled with the operation of construction equipment would potentially produce emissions comprised of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and hydrocarbons. Carbon monoxide and particulates usually create localized impacts near emission sources, while nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons contribute to regional pollutant concentrations.

Emissions from construction-related activities would result in a minor additional degradation of the quality of air in the Gonzales Planning Area. As discussed in the previous section on the Air Quality Management Program, the Air Quality Section of the Community Health and Safety Element provides policies that would minimize the amount of emissions from construction-related activities.

K. Infrastructure and Municipal Services

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1. Existing Setting

a. Sewer Service. The City of Gonzales' wastewater treatment facilities are located off Gonzales River Road along the Salinas River about 1.7 miles west of the City. The facility was constructed in 1931. A new headworks and six new combined facultative/percolation ponds were constructed in 1963. Two additional facultative/percolation ponds were constructed in 1976 and 1978. The plant and disposal facilities, which includes three disposal fields totaling 18 acres, were renovated in 1982. In order to accommodate additional growth, the permit for the plant from the Central Coast Region of the Water Quality Control Board must be modified and additional facilities added.[1]

Most homes and businesses in Gonzales are connected to the treatment plant with the exception of the area west of Alta Street and south of Gonzales River Road, and the area south of the winery. The plant currently operates at about 75 percent of its 706,000 per day (gpd) capacity.

The plant provides primary treatment only, which includes settling and aeration, with disposal through percolation or field irrigation discharge. The wastewater enters the plant through a 21-inch trunk line from the City to the plant. The line lies approximately 2,500 feet north of Gonzales River Road. The wastewater enters the plant by gravity and is pumped from the headworks to the facultative ponds. The pond effluent then flows by gravity to the disposal fields. The field area is sufficient to accommodate an application rate of two inches per day with one of the three fields out of service. Discing and leveling of the fields is necessary to maintain even percolation.

At present, the plant operates slightly over the BOD loading standards set by the Water Quality Control Board. In order to decrease loading, more aerators need to be added to the facility. The City is in the process of contracting out engineering projects and securing permits to increase the capacity of the plant.

[1] Carlos Lopez, Director of Public Works, City of Gonzales, personal communication.

Because the facility provides primary treatment, it cannot handle any heavy metals, strong pesticides or organic compounds. To accommodate the projected population and subsequent dwelling unit increase given in the Land Use Element of the General Plan, expansion of the wastewater treatment plant will be necessary. The General Plan recommends reserving a 50-acre site adjacent to the treatment plant for its eventual expansion.

b. Water Service.

(1) Water Supply. The water system is managed by the Gonzales Department of Public Works. The City of Gonzales receives its municipal water supply from three active wells which range in depth from 500 to 900 feet. The City supplies water to all residents, commercial users, and industrial users in the City but does not supply the schools, which have their own wells. Rates are set by the City Council, and in 1990 the Council increased rates. In addition, revenues have been raised as a result of water impact fees. Revenues from increased rates and those from impact fees have been earmarked to make improvements in wells, water delivery systems and maintenance for current and future populations. However, revenues have not yet been adequate to make all the necessary improvements.

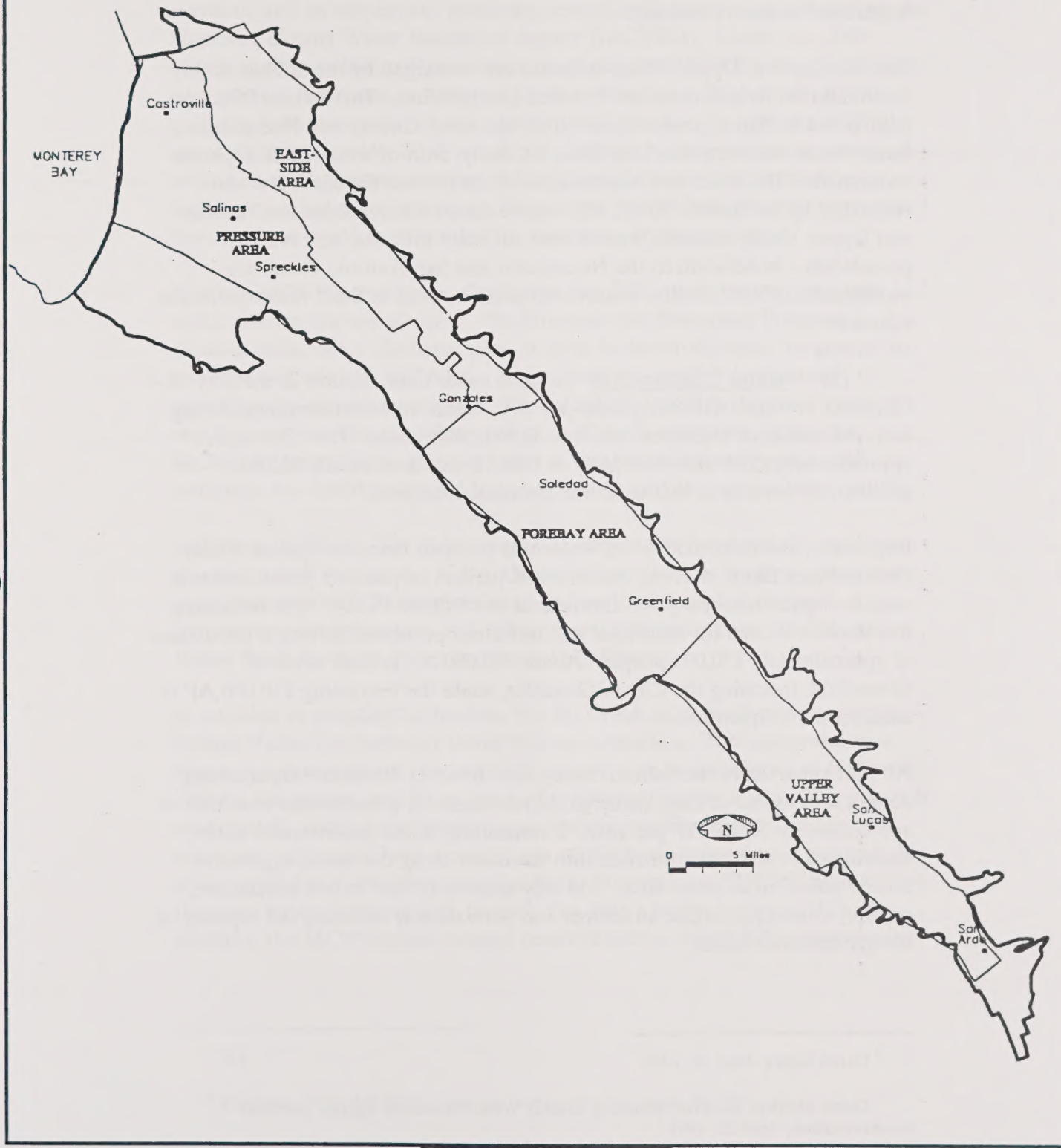
The City has a 1 million gallon storage reservoir located near Iverson Road and Johnson Canyon Road. In 1985, at the time the storage capacity was studied, a fire flow need of 3,500 gpm was identified. The existing storage capacity of 1 million gallons is inadequate for projected domestic and fire-fighting purposes; an additional 630,000 gallon capacity is estimated to meet the projected fire flow demand of the General Plan buildout.

Water is delivered to customers through a system of 4 to 12 inch diameter lines. A major constraint on water service is the size and condition of the 4-inch line mains, especially for fire-fighting purposes. Water pressure is currently 89 psi. The maximum allowable pressure requirements in lines is 120 psi, and thus, the City is operating within the desired pressure.[2]

The City's well water is supplied from groundwater sources within the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin.[3] The basin is separated into four hydrologically linked areas. Gonzales extracts water from three of these subareas: the Eastside, Pressure and Forebay areas (see Figure 18). The fourth area, the

[2] Personal communication, Carlos Lopez, Public Works Department, City of Gonzales, October 30,1995.

[3] Denise Duffy Associates, *Draft EIR*, LDL Investments, November 1991.



NORTH

SOURCE: Monterey County Water Resource Agency, 1992

GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FIGURE 18
Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin Sub-Regions

Upper Valley, does not directly supply water to the City's wells, but is an "upstream" source of recharge.

The Forebay and Upper Valley subareas are recharged by the Salinas River, its tributaries, irrigation return flow and precipitation. The Salinas River, in turn, is fed by San Antonio Reservoir in Monterey County and Nacimiento Reservoir in northern San Luis Obispo County, both of which lie in separate watersheds. The other two subareas, the Pressure and Eastside, are not recharged by the Salinas River, but receive their recharge from the Forebay and Upper Valley subareas, runoff from adjacent hillsides, and rainfall percolation. In addition to the Nacimiento and San Antonio Reservoir watersheds, 150-200 smaller watersheds provide some indirect recharge to the subareas.

(2) Water Consumption. In 1990, water consumption in the City of Gonzales averaged 813,698 gallons per day. Total water consumption during July, the month of maximum use, was 33,901,500 gallons. The City used approximately 1,099 acre feet (AF) in 1994 (1 acre foot equals 326,000 gallons); 59 percent of that total was for residential uses.[4]

Regionally, about 530,000 AF of water was pumped from the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin in 1994. About 90-95 percent of pumped groundwater is used for agricultural purposes throughout the Salinas Valley. The remaining five percent is used for municipal and industrial purposes, serving a population of approximately 150,000 people. About 400,000 AF is used north of Greenfield, including the City of Gonzales, while the remaining 130,000 AF is used south of Greenfield.[5]

All four subareas of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin are experiencing demands in excess of their recharge, which results in a basin-wide overdraft of approximately 50,000 AF per year. Overdrafting of the groundwater basin contributes to seawater intrusion into the basin along the coast, aggravates nitrate pollution in many areas, and may ultimately lead to soil subsidence, possibly damaging surface structures and permanently reducing the capacity of the groundwater basin.[6]

[4] Carlos Lopez, June 16, 1995.

[5] Debra Shifflett, Director, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, personal communication, April 25, 1995.

[6] Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Ordinance No. 3539.

(3) Water Policy. To address the increasing problem of groundwater overdraft and its subsequent problems, several ordinances were adopted by the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA). Under the 1990 Monterey County Water Resources Agency Act, the MCWRA has jurisdiction over matters pertaining to water within the entire area of Monterey County, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas. In 1991 the MCWRA adopted Ordinance No. 3539, which provides water conservation regulations using best management practices. Mandatory restrictions relate to the washing of vehicles, swimming pools and spas, use of hydrants, and irrigation. Specific fines would be levied for the violations of the ordinance.[7]

Another MCWRA regulation, Ordinance No. 3717, contains two programs which address the use of wells. The Groundwater Extracting Program requires wells with a discharge pipe of three inches in diameter or greater to be registered with the MCWRA. It also requires monthly and annual reporting of well water pumping. The Installation of Flow Meters Program requires the installation of flow meters in all wells operating within the MCWRA's jurisdiction. However, due to the Flow Meters Program, this ordinance has been challenged by local farmers and has not yet been settled.[8]

MCWRA Ordinance No. 3744, which was adopted in January 1994, requires all cities within the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin to develop urban water conservation plans. These plans must reduce the amount of pumped groundwater for urban uses and reduce overall pumping from the Salinas Valley Basin by about 15 percent from 1987 figures.

In addition to adopting ordinances, the MCWRA is currently developing the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin Management Plan. This comprehensive long-range management plan, which is expected to be completed in 1996, will address the current and future state of the Salinas Valley Basin. The plan will cover water quality and quantity issues, existing problems and long-range solutions. Although there are currently no limits on groundwater pumping for either agricultural or urban uses, the Basin Management Plan will also address the need for establishing such limits.[9] The Plan's horizon year is 2020. In addition, the MCWRA has recently received federal funding to address using

[7] *ibid.*

[8] Kimberley Wall, MCWRA, personal communication, April 24, 1995.

[9] Ordinance No. 3720, adopted in October 1993, established upper pumping limits for agriculture. However, it was repealed in July 1994.

reclaimed wastewater for irrigated agriculture. This alternative could reduce the amount of groundwater that is used for agriculture.

The City also encourages conservation, primarily through tiered rate schedules, drought tolerant landscape practices, and requests that all new development meet MCWRA and LAFCO standards.[10] In addition, Gonzales has a water conservation ordinance (Ordinance No. 493). This ordinance restricts water use for car washes, construction, landscape irrigation, plumbing fixtures and industrial use, and sets fines for violations.

(4) Water Quality. A major problem in the Salinas Valley with respect to water quality is high levels of nitrates in the groundwater supply.[11] The Monterey County Water Resources Agency has studied nitrate levels in the groundwater at 58 wells using 25-33 years of data. Forty-eight percent of all wells monitored in the unconfined subareas exceeded the State drinking water standard of 45 mg/L in 1987. Based on trends over the last 10 years, mean nitrate concentrations could exceed the drinking water standard in the year 2000 by 1.90 to 4.4 times in all unconfined areas.

The water quality within the Gonzales Planning Area is generally good, except for an agricultural area to the northeast, located in the Eastside Subarea (see the Water Supply section). MCWRA studies evaluated agricultural wells outside the City limits. Locations with high nitrate concentrations (over 45 mg/L) were field checked for land use practices that might explain elevated nitrate concentrations. It was found that most areas in the Pressure and Eastside subareas with nitrate concentrations of 90 mg/L or greater were associated with greenhouse operations. The dairy and feed lot outside Gonzales have also shown high nitrate concentrations.

The quality of surface water is also an issue of concern. Most surface water pollution is a result of urban and agricultural runoff. Urban runoff may contain lawn fertilizer, motor oil, grease, trash and soil sediment from construction sites. Agricultural runoff may contain pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and animal waste. These materials can be washed up by rainwater and eventually transmitted into the Gonzales Slough and the Salinas River.

The Gonzales Public Works Department takes regular measurements of water quality. Levels of nitrates were high in the past in several wells in the City. Subsequently, special seals have been placed on the wells to block nitrates

[10] Carlos Lopez, Gonzales Department of Public Works, June 16, 1995.

[11] Denise Duffy & Associates, *Draft EIR, LDL Investments,* November 1991.

from entering the water supply. At present, the City water meets all water quality standards.

c. Solid Waste Disposal. The City of Gonzales operates a municipal disposal system and uses the Johnson Canyon Disposal Site to dispose its solid waste. The landfill, which is managed by Monterey County, is located on Johnson Canyon Road about three miles east of Gonzales. The landfill also serves the communities of Spreckels, Chualar, Paraiso Springs, Greenfield, Soledad and the surrounding unincorporated area. The site has been in operation since 1976.

The landfill site covers 122.5 acres but only 86 acres of the site are useable because of State Division of Forestry setback requirements and other design restrictions. Disposal operations are being carried out on the most easterly 22.5 acres of the site. The remaining area is being used for agricultural purposes with 60 acres reserved for eventual landfill expansion.

A study of the capacity of the site was conducted in 1990 by the Monterey County Integrated Waste Management Task Force. The remaining capacity of the landfill at that time was 1,185,500 tons or 1,976,300 cubic yards. Based on existing and future anticipated waste intake for the landfill's service area, this capacity should be sufficient to accommodate refuse to the year 2030. Calculations to determine the life of the landfill are based on population figures generated by AMBAG.[12]

d. Police Protection. The Citizens Advisory Committee identified adequate police protection as an issue that should be considered as part of additional growth of the City. The City of Gonzales has ten permanent employees on its police force: a Police Chief, a Police Lieutenant, two Sergeants and six officers. There are also four reserve officers with each officer working one shift per week. The Police Department has seven vehicles: six patrol cars and a pick up truck used for animal control. The police department is located in City Hall at Belden and 4th Streets.[13]

In 1963, the ratio of officer to population in Gonzales was 1.8. By 1980 the ratio had increased to 2.2. The general rule for urban police force needs is one officer per 1,000 residents. The current ratio of officers to population in Gonzales is 1.8 per 1000 residents, although this standard is based only on the

[12] Johnson Canyon Landfill, *Source Reduction and Recycling Element.*

[13] Sergeant Clinton, Gonzales Police Department, personal communication, August 8, 1995.

permanent population; the influx of seasonal workers tends to decrease the ratio. One-half to one vehicle is also needed per 1,000 people.[14]

The City Council identified a deficiency in services and revenue for public safety in the 1980's. The City favored imposing a fee on development, but needed information to determine the legality of imposing such a fee and the amount that might be justified. Thus, in 1989, a consulting firm analyzed the growth in the community to determine what future capital would be needed to serve the growing needs of the community.[15] The study investigated mitigation fees and recommended impact fees be charged. Impact fees have since been adopted.

Impact fees can be used to make physical improvements or buy vehicles. Impact fees may not be used to pay salaries or maintain existing facilities. As a result of the increased revenue, the police department facilities have been improved. Furthermore, old vehicles are being phased out and replaced. Further improvements in the police communications system are needed and additional storage space for evidence and property is gravely needed.

In addition to its normal duties of maintaining order and public peace and safety, the department is responsible for animal control, documentation of traffic accidents, fingerprinting for immigration, medical emergencies, domestic violence and educational awareness programs for youth regarding drugs and gang activity.

During peak harvest season, there is more activity on the streets. The police department must respond to the increased activity. Because manpower on the force is limited, the officers often work overtime during the period of time when the population swells.[16]

In addition to the ratio of officers to population, another measure of the adequacy of police services is the time necessary to respond to a call. The greatest distance between the police department and any developed area is approximately one mile. Average response time is 2 to 3 minutes under normal circumstances. With traffic congestion, response time increases to 3 to

[14] Ray Green, Police Chief, City of Gonzales, personal communication, July 19, 1993.

[15] The Abbey Group, *City of Gonzales, Police and Fire Capital Facilities Mitigation Analysis,* August 1989.

[16] Ray Green, Police Chief City of Gonzales, personal communication, July 19, 1993.

5 minutes.[17] For example, 5th Street is currently the only access route across Highway 101 that links the community east of the highway to the police in the west of the highway. The lack of other access routes across the highway and traffic congestion would increase response times to the east of the highway as the General Plan builds out.

e. Fire Protection. The City of Gonzales Fire Department is completely staffed by volunteer fire fighters. There is a fire chief and a 30 - 35 person fire fighting unit. The fire department has six vehicles: one patrol unit, a 1967 pickup truck with a 100 gallons per minute (gpm) pump, two engines with 1,250 gpm pumps, one 1954 vintage engine with a 750 gpm pump, one 3,000 gallon tank water tender and one 75-foot aerial ladder truck.[18] The fire department is located on Center Street between Third and Fourth Streets.

In 1989, the Abbey Group, Inc. prepared a report which covered fire protection adequacy and identified several potential problems.[19] First, a totally volunteer fire department has the disadvantage of relying on local citizenry who may be employed at some distance from the fire. Response time depends upon the distance a volunteer firefighter must travel to get to the fire and the traffic encountered on the way.

The consultants recommended the construction of an additional fire station if more residential development occurs on the east side of the freeway. Furthermore, the physical plant was found to be very inefficient and small. The department itself has identified an immediate need to replace three old pieces of equipment: the patrol truck, 750 gpm engine and the water tender. Parking also needs improvement at the fire house.

Fire services are rated by the Insurance Service Organization. These are called ISO ratings and range from one (good) to nine (bad). The City was last rated in 1980. The City of Gonzales has an ISO rating of 6. Insurance rates of residents are based on ISO ratings. If the ISO rating is low, the fire insurance rates will also tend to be lower.

The average response time for the fire department is 4-6 minutes plus travel time. There is also only one access route across the freeway. Traffic

[17] Sergeant Clinton, personal communication, August 8, 1995.

[18] Assistant Fire Chief Wolgammott, personal communication.

[19] The Abbey Group, *City of Gonzales, Police and Fire Capital Facilities Mitigation Analysis,* August 1989.

congestion on that route can add to response time by the fire department. There is no state standard set for populations or types of development which require a paid fire fighting unit versus unpaid. However, demands on the time of the volunteers, their time away from work to fight fires or attend training sessions often is the deciding factor in the conversion of a volunteer force to a paid force. Time demands for training have increased recently.

The needs for fire fighting services are greater for residential-commercial uses than agricultural industry uses. Although the agricultural users have hazardous wastes stored on site, the industry has an emergency plan and employees are trained in emergency response.

Water supply is adequate for fire fighting in most parts of the City. There is a weak supply, however at 10th Street, Cielo Vista, Del Monte, Brockmann and Elliott. One storage tank in that area may need to be provided to increase fire fighting efficiency.

The fire department is trained for hazardous waste incidents and has conducted disaster drills for the last eight years. The department showed its ability to deal with large incidents during the Loma Prieta earthquake. The department handled 30 incidents.

f. Schools. Gonzales is within two school districts: the Gonzales Union Elementary School District which serves Grades K - 8, and the Gonzales Union High School District which serves Grades 9 - 12. There are three schools in Gonzales: the La Gloria School which serves Grades K - 4, the Fairview Middle School, which serves Grades 5 - 8, and the Gonzales High School, which serves Grades 9 - 12.

The three schools are located west of Highway 101 and are adjacent to Gonzales Slough. The schools are all within walking distance of each other. Gonzales Union High School is bordered by the Slough to the east and 5th Street to the south. Fairview Middle School is located immediately south of 5th Street and east of the Slough, with La Gloria School located immediately to the south. The Gonzales Union High School Stadium is located northwest of the high school and is bordered by the highway to the east.

Both school districts serve the entire City and surrounding Planning Area. The Gonzales Union High School District extends beyond the City limits of Gonzales and covers an area extending from south of Salinas to Soledad. The Gonzales Union Elementary School District serves an area of approximately 75 square miles around the City. Both districts use buses to transport students to and from school. A bus for elementary students is necessary to

bring students from the residential development on the east side of the freeway. The pedestrian route to the school crosses the freeway access lanes.

(1) Enrollment and Classroom Size. In recent years, both districts experienced dramatic increases in school enrollment. In 1963 when the first General Plan was completed, the population of Gonzales was 2,200. At that time, the Gonzales Union High School District had approximately 500 students and the Gonzales Union School District had about 650 students. By 1980, Gonzales High School District and the Union School District has grown to 850 students and 735 students, respectively.

As of 1992, the high school had approximately 1,100 students. Gonzales High School is over capacity.[20] In 1992, there were three temporary classrooms and two emergency portable classrooms in use with 55 teachers. The average number of students per classroom for high schools was 29. The La Gloria school had an enrollment of 754 students and Fairview Middle School had an enrollment of 453 students. The elementary schools currently exceed their capacity. As of 1992, there were 15 portable classrooms and about 29 students per classroom.[21]

Classroom size is monitored by the State Department of Education.[22] A penalty can be assessed to the District if the student-teacher ratio is too great. The California average for student-teacher ratio is 28:1. For elementary schools, penalties vary with each grade level. For kindergarten, enrollment must not exceed 33 and the district average of over 31 triggers a penalty. For grades 1, 2 and 3, enrollments of over 32, and a district average of over 30 triggers a penalty. For grades 4-8, a district average of over 29.9 triggers a penalty. High schools do not have a penalty system.

The districts project enrollments for future years. The District can predict the number of students from the permanent year-round population. Although each year workers come to Gonzales to work in the agricultural industry, and some workers bring families while others do not, the Districts are nevertheless generally able to predict future enrollments based on past experience.

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[20] Harold M. Freiman, Lozano Smith Smith Woliver & Behrens, Comment Letter to Gonzales General Plan Draft EIR, February 23, 1996.

[21] Gordon Piffero, Gonzales Union School District, personal communication, July 29, 1993.

[22] Nina Johnson, State of California, Department of Education, personal communication.

Historically, the Districts' enrollment projects have proven to be very close to actual enrollment.

(2) Expansion. The Gonzales Union Elementary School District (GUSD) would like to expand but does not believe the existing site is large enough to accommodate expanded facilities. The district has identified a potential school site on Johnson Canyon Road about a mile east of Gonzales. However, that site may be too small for the District's needs and its distant non-contiguous location would conflict with County land use policies and make it difficult for many students to walk to school. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the district will be able to build a school in the near future because of lack of funds as it would cost about $12. million.[23]

Based on the results of a June 1995 general election, the City of Soledad has acquired 50 acres of land within its City limits that would potentially have been used by the Gonzales High School District for a new high school. The City of Soledad would create its own school district upon construction of a new facility on the 50 acres and Soledad students would no longer attend Gonzales High School in the Gonzales High School District. However, due to limited funds, the construction of this new school and new district is unlikely until 1998. Until then, Soledad students will continue to attend the Gonzales High School.[24]

School districts in the state are having difficulties financing new facilities; thus, in many communities, developer fees are being imposed to defray the costs of construction. Impact fees for schools are often limited by statute and may not reflect the true cost per student of providing facilities. The Gonzales High School District cites a 1992 Developer Fee Justification Study which assesses the school facility construction cost per student as $16,681.00. At a student generation ratio of .25 per unit of residential development, the average cost for each residential unit would be $4,170.25.[25] This cost would vary depending on various factors, including the amount of available state funding which could defray some of the costs, the type of housing (e.g., low income housing), and the size of new residential development units (e.g., in square footage).

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[23] Art Brusa, Gonzales Union School District, personal communication.

[24] Harold Freiman, Attorney, Gonzales High School District, personal communication, December 1, 1995.

[25] The cost of school facilities on a per-home basis is the cost per one full student multiplied by the student generation rate (the average number of student expected to be generated per home).

g. Parks and Recreation Facilities. The City currently has parks which cover a total of about 14 acres. Centennial Park is located on First Street at Gonzales Slough. It covers 7.9 acres and includes a swimming pool and baseball field. Central Park, the oldest park in Gonzales covers 2.8 acres and is bounded by Day Street, Fifth Street, Center Street and Sixth Street. Central Park is a community gather area with picnic and barbecue, playground, basketball, and volleyball facilities. A third park of approximately 3 acres has been designated in the new California Breeze Subdivision.

The City Department of Public Works maintains the City parks.

The ratio of parks per resident has decreased since the 1991 General Plan was prepared. In 1981, there were 10.7 acres of parks for 2,891 Gonzales residents, or 3.7 acres per 1,000 residents. There are presently 2.2 acres of parkland for each 1,000 residents. New neighborhood parks are proposed on the Anderson Ranch property and in the area to be developed south of California Breeze. The City also proposes to use impact fees and revenues to improve restroom facilities and make improvements in the two new parks.

The City offers a variety of recreational programs which are organized by the Salinas YMCA. Those programs include day camps, field trips and classes for children. There are also sports programs, including soccer and softball. For adults, trips and sports activities, including basketball, softball and volleyball are organized.

h. Open Space. Gonzales is also surrounded by agricultural lands that function as open space. There are only about 19 acres of land dedicated as permanent parks and open space within the existing City limits, including the public parks discussed in the previous section. Although not a park, Gonzales Slough and its adjacent flood control areas also serves as an open space area covering approximately 5.3 acres. It forms an open space corridor between the vineyard at the south end of town and the Gonzales High School stadium on the north side of town. About five acres along the banks of the Gonzales Slough used for flood control are designated as open space. The Slough is the most notable natural feature in Gonzales, bisecting the City and forming a major open space corridor.

Although they are not designated as open space areas, some developed areas in Gonzales also have an open space character and provide similar aesthetic and environmental benefits. These areas include the Cemetery and the landscaping grounds surrounding the Monterey Vineyards.

i. Community Facilities. The City provides a senior citizens program at the Community Center. The Alliance for Aging provides a food service. Two community centers are located in town: the Gonzales Community Center and the Multi-Purpose Center which includes meeting rooms.

The City leases a facility to Children's Services International, which operates a day care center with about 34 students. The Trinity Preschool is a private, non-profit day care center.

2. Criteria of Significance

The following criteria of Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines were used to determine significant adverse impacts on infrastructure and municipal services.

- The General Plan would exceed existing sewage collection or treatment capacity or solid waste disposal capacity.
- The General Plan would interfere substantially with groundwater recharge.
- The General Plan would interfere with emergency services, requiring additional staff and equipment.
- The General Plan would conflict with established recreational and educational uses of the area.

3. Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses whether or not the General Plan would have significant impacts to infrastructure and municipal services according to the CEQA criteria given above.

a. Sewer Service and Wastewater Treatment. Under the General Plan's buildout projections, population would increase to 11,578 persons. Peak demand on the wastewater treatment plant is projected to be about 1.25 mgd. New services would need to be provided at development sites, and old sewer lines in the City would need to be replaced with larger ones to accommodate the projected growth of the General Plan. Expansion of agricultural industry operations could also require expanded lines.

Although buildout projections under the General Plan would exceed the capacity of the existing wastewater treatment plant, the Plan meets this future demand by designating about 50 acres around the existing plant for future expansion. Under Policy 3.1 of the Community Facilities and Services Element, the City would increase the capacity of the wastewater treatment

plant commensurate with projected population and employment growth in the City. Improvements should include expansion of the effluent disposal facilities and the construction of new collection mains. Additionally, under Policy 3.2, the City would permit new development only when it can be demonstrated that sufficient wastewater collection and treatment capacity is available or would be available at the time of development without diminishing existing service levels.

Thus, if the policies regarding sewage treatment and service are adopted as proposed and the treatment plant is expanded to accommodate future growth, the General Plan would not result in a significant impact on City's sewage and wastewater treatment service.

b. Water Supply. The General Plan projects a total population of 11,578 residents, 1,580 new total dwelling units and over five million square feet of commercial and industrial space at buildout in 2015 (see Table 2). At current residential and industrial consumption rates, the City would likely use about 2,200 acre feet (AF) per year at buildout.[26]

Impact INFRA-1. The General Plan would interfere substantially with recharge of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. (S)

The Water Service Existing Setting provides a detailed description of MCWRA ordinances regarding the consumption of water. For example, Ordinance No. 3539 requires cities within the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin to adopt water conservation measures. The Monterey County Water Resources Agency is also currently developing the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin Management Plan which addresses the current and future state of the groundwater basin.

Gonzales has also developed measures such as Ordinance No. 493 which restricts the amount of water for certain uses such as cleaning and landscape irrigation. Additionally, under Policy 2.2 of the General Plan Community Facilities and Services Element, Gonzales would permit new development only when water can be supplied and delivered without threatening the water supply or water quality in the rest of the City.

[26] This projection was calculated using the 1994 consumption total of 1,099 AF by the City of Gonzales. The population in 1994 was about 5,800; population under General Plan is projected at 11,578. Water consumption at population buildout is therefore estimated to be approximately twice the consumption in 1994.

Mitigation Measure INFRA-1a. Fully implement the ordinances of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (described in the Existing Settings, Water Policy section).

Mitigation Measure INFRA-1b. Adopt and implement General Plan policies and City Ordinance No. 493 which address water conservation measures.

Although policies and ordinances attempt to minimize the impact of groundwater withdrawal on the basin's overdraft problem, they will be insufficient to minimize the impact to a less than significant level. The impact on the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin, in order to meet the population growth of the General Plan, would remain significant and unavoidable. (SU)

c. Solid Waste Disposal. Buildout of the General Plan would not exceed the capacity of the Johnson Canyon Disposal Site, therefore resulting in no significant impact. As discussed in the Existing Setting section, the disposal site should be sufficient to accommodate solid waste to the year 2030.

The Community Facilities and Services Element also contains policies and implementing actions addressing waste-reduction and recycling. Under Policy 5.1 of the Element, Gonzales will support programs to compost yard waste, and to recycle or reuse paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics, motor oil and other items. Policy 5.3 would require Gonzales to support State and County programs to reduce waste generation and to provide safe disposal sites to meet long-term needs.

d. Police and Fire Protection. If the policies of the General Plan are adopted as proposed, the General Plan would not result in a significant impact on the City's emergency services, particularly police and fire protection.

Policy 4.1 of the Community Health and Safety Element requires the expansion of police and fire protection services at a rate which recognizes the City's growth and changing citizenry. Policy 4.5 recommends the gradual conversion of the City's all-volunteer Fire Department to a combined paid staff and volunteer department. Although conversion to a combined paid staff and volunteer department continues to remain an option, such a conversion is unlikely to occur in the near term.[27] Policy 4.6 requires that the water system provide adequate water flow for peak fire suppression needs before

[27] Harold Wolgamott, Fire Chief, Gonzales Fire Department, personal communication, April 29, 1996.

new development is approved. Additionally, Policy 4.3 would require new development to fund police and fire protection service needs that would result from such development.

e. Schools. The General Plan designates about 277 vacant acres for future residential uses. Of that figure, 252 vacant acres would potentially accommodate an additional 1,179 low density residential units. Single family, low density residences would likely house families with school-age children. Furthermore, as the Population, Employment and Housing section of this chapter discusses, the City of Gonzales contains a higher proportion of children under the age of nineteen than the County and the State. The General Plan would result in a significant rise in school enrollment in the City.

A significant rise in school enrollment in the city could have a significant impact on schools as a result of the lack of adequate capacity for new students at existing school sites. However, implementation of the policies in the Community Facilities and Services Element and the Land Use Elements will serve to mitigate school-related impacts associated with the General Plan. Policy 6.6 of the Community Facilities and Services Element and Policy 10.3 of the Land Use Element recommend a second elementary school to serve new development areas east of Highway 101. The City should consider requiring a site dedication as a condition of development approval in the area south of the C Street extension and east of Highway 101. Community Facilities and Services Policy 6.3 requires new development to contribute funds to both the elementary School District and the High School District for the acquisition of land and/or school facilities which would be necessary to accommodate students from such development. The City shall attempt to enforce such policies in accordance with applicable law so as to provide sufficient mitigation to render impacts less-than-significant. In instances in which the City determines that such impacts cannot or should not be fully mitigated, adoption of an appropriate statement of overriding considerations will be required.

The Gonzales Union High School District currently enrolls students from nearby cities such as Soledad. Under Policy 6.1, the City should support the construction of a second high school in Soledad rather than relocating the entire high school student body to a larger school. As a community focal point, the Gonzales Union High School and Stadium should be kept in the City.

f. Parks, Recreational and Community Facilities. The General Plan contains policies that address the City's parks, recreational and community facilities. Policies 8.1 through 8.7 of the Environmental Resources and Conservation Element address the goal of creating a park system that meets the recreational needs of present and future Gonzales residents. Under Policy 8.1, the City would provide parks and recreational facilities of varying sizes and functions to meet the needs of Gonzales residents. Total park acreage throughout the City should be commensurate with the City's growth. Policy 8.5 would require proponents of new residential development to contribute to the acquisition and/or development of adequate parks and recreational facilities, either through the dedication of parkland, payment of mitigation fees, or both.

Policies in the Community Facilities and Services Element address the goal of improving and expanding the City's public facilities and services such as the library and Civic Center. Policy 7.1 and Implementing Action 7.1 recommend that the City work with the County to obtain funds for a permanent new library in downtown Gonzales. Under Implementing Action 9.2, the City should attempt to acquire properties in the general area of City Hall as potential sites for future civic facilities.

If these and other policies and action programs are adopted and implemented, projected growth and development under the General Plan would not have a significant impact on the City's parks, recreational and community facilities.

Chapter V
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

■ ■ ■

A. Descriptions of Alternatives

1. Alternative 1: No Development

The No Development Alternative involves a comparison of the General Plan's effects with existing environmental conditions. Under this alternative, it is assumed that neither the changes in growth allowed under the General Plan Update nor future growth allowed under the existing General Plan would occur. Because this comparison is presented throughout the main text of this EIR (and is in fact the operative legal comparison required for determination of "significance" for several of the environmental impact categories), the impact discussion below is brief.

2. Alternative 2: No Project/Limited Development

As distinguished from the previous alternative (No Development), the No Project/Limited Development alternative involves an evaluation of the future development that would be expected to occur under the existing General Plan.

The No Project/Limited Development alternative assumes that development would not occur beyond City limits, and that General Plan Amendments and annexation would not be approved for development proposals. Of the 600 acres that are currently within the City limits, existing land uses would generally remain the same: 191 acres of residential uses, 128 acres of industrial uses; 18 acres of commercial uses; 78 acres of public/semi-public uses; 16 acres of open space; and 14 acres of streets, highways, railroads, and utilities. The existing vacant properties in the City (28 acres) could be developed in a manner that is consistent with their land use designation. Beyond the City limits, over 6200 acres of primarily prime agricultural lands within the Planning Area would remain undeveloped.

Under this alternative, employment figures would generally remain the same. The majority of employed persons in Gonzales, about 40 percent, would

continue to be employed in agricultural activities and related agricultural industries and services.[1] The circulation system in Gonzales would also generally remain as it currently exists.

3. Alternative 3: Residential Community

This alternative emphasizes the development of Gonzales as a residential community and provides for a wide variety of residential development from very low density to medium density housing. As shown in Figure 19, this alternative would locate residential, neighborhood commercial and public land east and west of the existing City. Industrial land would be located north of Gonzales River Road, and a highway commercial center would be located on the east side of the Southern Highway 101/Alta Street interchange.

Table 11 shows the amount of land allocated for each use under the Residential Community Alternative. This alternative would designate 624 acres of land for new uses, including 14 acres of infill and 610 acres of surrounding agricultural land. Development of the residential land would provide up to 1,686 new dwelling units. The commercial land would include 8 acres of neighborhood commercial and 5 acres of highway commercial land. Gonzales Slough would be designated open space, and a new "C" Street overpass would be built over Highway 101. This alternative would accommodate a population of about 13,000 at buildout. Because cities usually do not develop to the maximum allowable density, the population under this alternative would probably fall in the range of 10,000 to 12,000.

4. Alternative 4: Commercial Center

This alternative emphasizes the development of a 50-acre tourist-oriented highway commercial development clustered around the southern Highway 101 ramp, as shown in Figure 20. This center would be intended to include uses that would not compete with the downtown, and that would generate revenue for upgrading the downtown. The development would capitalize on the existing Monterey Vineyard Winery located to the northwest, and could include such uses as a recreational vehicle overnight facility or a factory outlet.

Table 12 shows the projected acreage for each land use at buildout under this alternative. A total of 525 acres of land would be designated for new urban uses, including 511 acres of surrounding agricultural land. Although these

[1] 1990 Census. Chapter IV, Section B: Population, Employment and Housing provides a profile of Gonzales' labor market in 1990.

Table 11
RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE

	Residential Community			
	Buildout Population 13,000[a]			
	Additional		Total	
	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Very Low Density	7	140	7	140
SF/Low Density	1,176	290	2,279	448
MF/Medium and High Density[b]	503	40	939	73
Total Residential	1,686	470	3,225	661
Commercial		13		43
Industrial		122		250
Public/Quasi-Public		19		97
Total Acres Designated		624		
Acres of Agricultural Land Designated for Urban Uses		610		

[a] Assumes 4.0 persons/household.
[b] Includes duplexes, townhouses, mobile homes, and farm worker housing.

Table 12
COMMERCIAL CENTER ALTERNATIVE

	Commercial Center			
	Buildout Population 11,000[a]			
	Addition		Total	
	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Very Low Density	0	0	0	0
SF/Low Density	869	205	1,972	363
MF/Medium and High Density[b]	372	25	808	58
Total Residential	1,241	230	2,780	421
Commercial		70		148
Industrial		210		338
Public/Quasi-Public		15		93
Total Acres Designated		525		
Acres of Agricultural Land Designated for Urban Uses		511		

[a] Assumes 4.0 persons/household.
[b] Includes duplexes, townhouses, mobile homes, and farm worker housing.

areas would accommodate up to 1,241 new residential units with a population of 11,000, population under this alternative would most likely be 9,000 to 10,000. This alternative would also designate 210 new acres of industrial land, 20 acres of neighborhood commercial, 50 acres of highway commercial, and 15 acres of public land.

5. Alternative 5: Agricultural Center

This alternative emphasizes the development of Gonzales as an agricultural industry and service center. Approximately 320 acres would be designated for industrial uses, targeting the agricultural food processing industry and ancillary uses to support the agricultural industry in the Salinas Valley. The existing agricultural industrial area would be extended to the south and west, as shown in Figure 21.

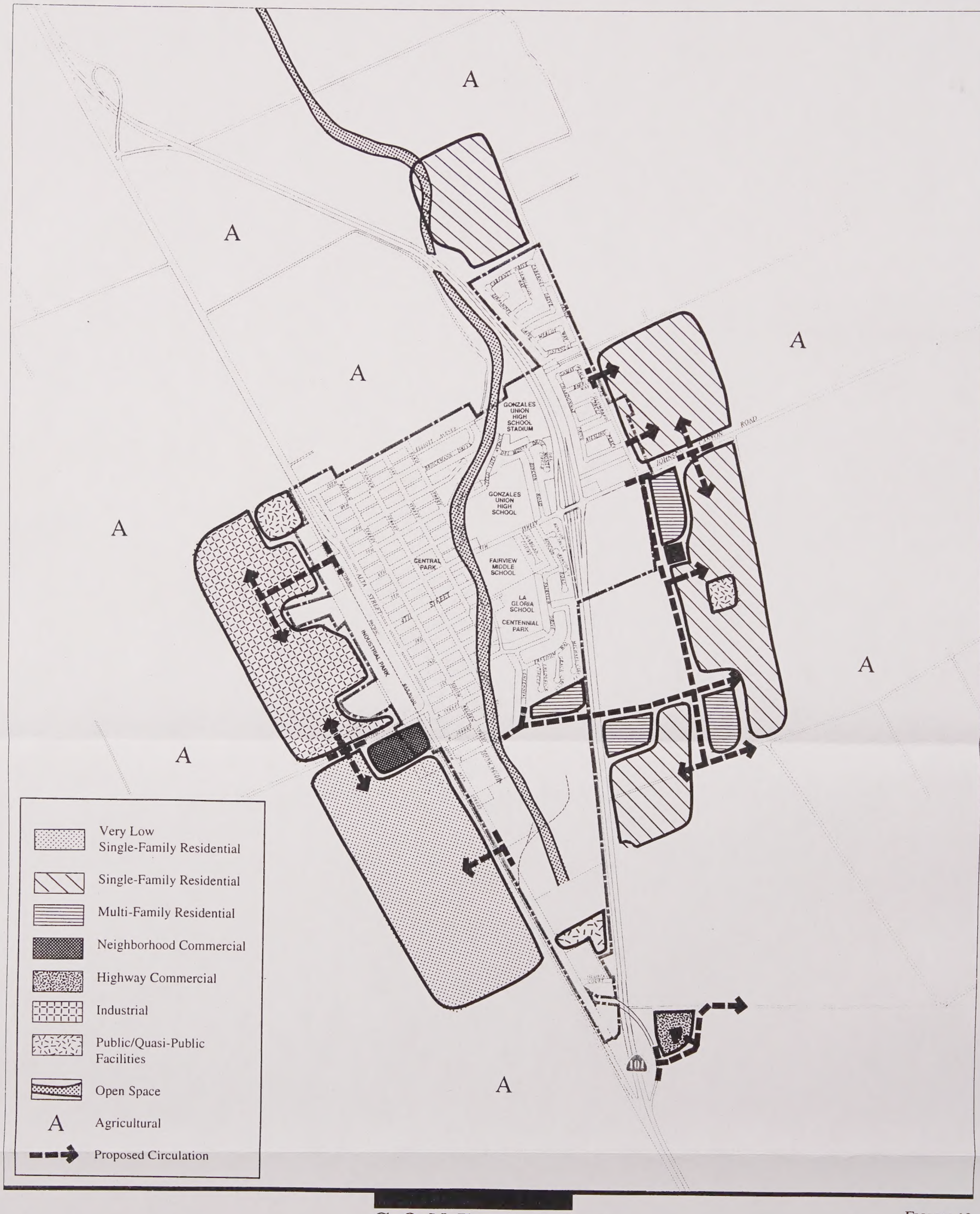
This alternative would designate 502 acres for new urban uses, including 478 acres of surrounding agricultural land. Table 13 shows the acreage for each land use under buildout conditions with the Agricultural Center Alternative. The new designations would include 148 acres of residential land (130 acres of low density and 18 acres of medium density) accommodating up to 776 additional dwelling units. The City could grow to a population between 8,000 and 9,000 by 2015. This alternative would also designate 19 acres of highway commercial, 9 acres of neighborhood commercial and 6 acres of public land.

B. Impacts of Alternatives

This section addresses the potential impacts of the alternatives to the General Plan. The No Development and No Project/Limited Development Alternatives are analyzed on the assumption that none of the new policies of the General Plan would be in place. However, the three land use alternatives, Residential Community, Commercial Center, and Agricultural Center, were developed on the assumption that the policies of the General Plan would be in place, except as modified by the nature of the alternative.

1. Alternative 1: No Development

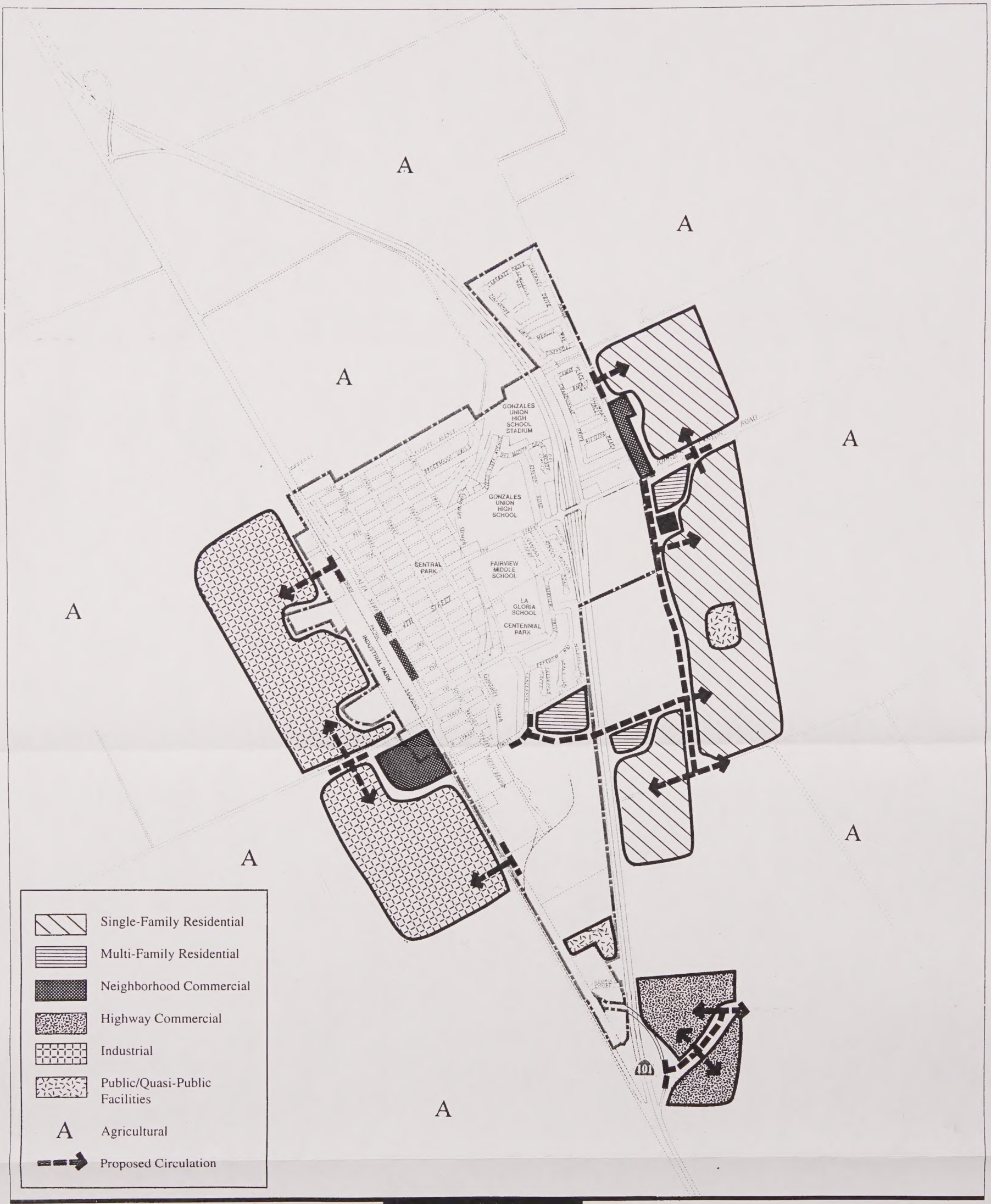
a. Land Use and Public Policy. The No Development Alternative would maintain present land use patterns in and immediately around the City of Gonzales. Present levels of prime agricultural land would be maintained. Any existing land use incompatibilities arising from the abrupt transition from urban to rural and agricultural uses that are not addressed by existing General



GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FIGURE 19
Residential Community Alternative

BRADY AND ASSOCIATES
PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



GONZALES
GENERAL PLAN
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NORTH

SCALE IN FEET
0 725 1450 2900

BRADY AND ASSOCIATES
PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

FIGURE 20
Commercial Center Alternative

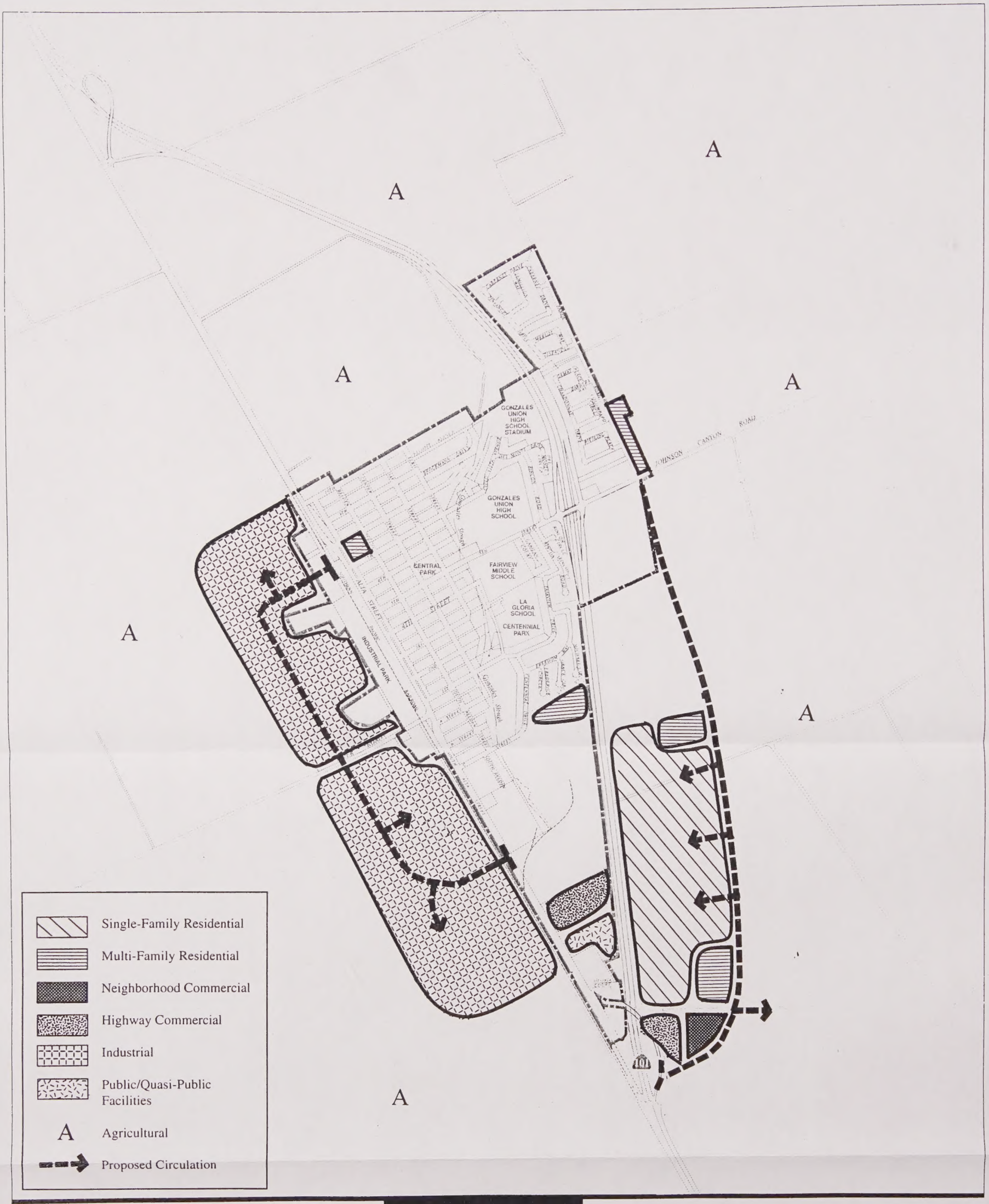

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FIGURE 21
Agricultural Center Alternative

BRADY AND ASSOCIATES
PLANNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Table 13
AGRICULTURE CENTER ALTERNATIVE

	Agriculture Center			
	Buildout Population 9,000[a]			
	Addition		Total	
	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Very Low Density	0	0	0	0
SF/Low Density	543	130	1,646	288
MF/Medium and High Density[b]	233	18	669	51
Total Residential	776	148	2,315	339
Commercial		28		46
Industrial		320		448
Public/Quasi-Public		6		84
Total Acres Designated		502		
Acres of Agricultural Land Designated for Urban Uses		478		

[a] Assumes 4.0 persons/household.
[b] Includes duplexes, townhouses, mobile homes, and farm worker housing.

Plan policies at the City's edge would be perpetuated. Existing land use incompatibilities would be inconsistent with the *Monterey County General Plan* and *Central Salinas Valley Area Plan.*

b. Population, Housing and Employment. This alternative would maintain the existing imbalance between jobs and housing in Gonzales. The City is presently weighted toward residential uses and this characteristic would continue in the absence of new development.

c. Traffic, Access and Circulation. The No Development Alternative would result in a continuation of the present intersection levels of service and other transportation conditions experienced in the City. All intersections currently operate with acceptable levels of service. Inadequate parking in certain locations and higher than desirable levels of truck parking on residential streets would also continue.

d. Visual Resources. The topography of the Gonzales Planning Area is primarily flat. The row crops that surround the City provide a visual landscape of open agricultural fields. These visual characteristics and others presently experienced in the City would continue under this alternative.

e. Soils, Geology and Hydrology. The geological and seismic conditions which presently exist would not be altered by this alternative. The proximity of the City to active faults and susceptibility to strong ground shaking would not change. The limited size of culverts within certain parts of the City would continue to be a problem.

f. Biotic Factors. The No Development Alternative would not alter the existing populations of plants and animals within the planning area. Current vegetation along the Gonzales Slough would remain in place.

g. Cultural Resources. Archaeological resources that are presently buried would remain so under this alternative. Existing structures of historic merit would not be subject to demolition or rapid deterioration but would remain, in some cases, unprotected from demolition or insensitive renovations that do not take advantage of their distinction.

h. Hazardous Materials. This alternative would not change the extent of hazardous materials found in Gonzales, but could increase the risk to residents and those employed in the City. The absence of policies addressing hazardous materials and related exposures without the General Plan could result in the inadequate separation between hazardous materials stored on industrial sites, and the unregulated transport of hazardous materials along City streets.

i. Noise. The existing noise environment in Gonzales is influenced primarily by vehicular and train traffic. Noise from industrial and agricultural operations plays a somewhat lesser role. Industrial-related noise would also potentially rise as a result of a lack of noise regulations. Residences and commercial businesses adjacent to such industries could be affected.

j. Air Quality. The Gonzales area is located in Monterey County and, even though the nearest air monitoring station (located in Salinas) has not recorded violations of either State of federal ozone standards since 1989, the area is designated a nonattainment area for ozone. This condition would not change under the No Development Alternative.

k. Infrastructure and Municipal Services. This alternative would result in a complex set of impacts to the various infrastructure components and municipal services evaluated in Chapter IV-K. To the extent that current levels of service are less than desired or are deteriorating, this alternative would not take any steps to improve the situation (as outlined in the General Plan). On the other hand, the absence of increased demands for services from new development would at least not stress the service delivery system any more than at present.

2. Alternative 2: No Project/Limited Development

a. Land Use and Public Policy. All future annexations and development outside of the City would be denied. Therefore, there would be no conversion of adjacent agricultural lands for urban uses. In cases where existing land use patterns result in incompatibilities among uses, this alternative would not improve the situation. This alternative would also be inconsistent with policies of the *Monterey County General Plan* and *Central Salinas Valley Area Plan* that require buffer areas and other measures to eliminate incompatible land uses.

b. Population, Housing and Employment. Natural population increases would most likely be about 1 percent per year. This assumes 20 births (the California average in 1990) and 10 deaths per 1,000 persons per year. At this rate, Gonzales's population would be about 7,400 by 2015. This projection is about 300 people more than could be accommodated at current household sizes. Migration into the City would also likely continue, although at a reduced rate, even if little new housing is provided. The results of this alternative would be overcrowding and out-migration of those residents who could afford to move.

A possible outcome of this alternative could be intensification of existing development, with associated increases in height of existing structures. Other regulatory, economic and social factors would have to be in place for this type of investment to occur, such as available employment, adequate schools and well maintained infrastructure and downtown areas. However, if this type of intensification were to occur, it could have a dramatic impact on the visual character of the City, its population, traffic, and services. These impacts would not, however, be significant under CEQA.

c. Traffic, Access and Circulation. No street improvements would be made. Traffic would increase minimally but would not be considered significant since the increase in population and employment would be small.

d. Visual Resources. The overall impact on visual resources would be minimal under the No Project/Limited Development Alternative since little new development would occur.

e. Soils, Geology and Hydrology. There would be no significant impacts on the soils of adjacent farmlands, and no new significant seismic, flooding, or related impacts would occur since only infill development would be allowed. However, this alternative would potentially result in continued urban and industrial runoff into Gonzales Slough with the existing drainage system and absence of policies and implementing actions encouraging the control of runoff.

f. Biotic Factors. There would likely be no significant impacts on plant and animal habitats since there would be no development on adjacent farmlands and only limited development within the City.

g. Cultural Resources. There would likely be no significant impacts on cultural resources due to the minimum development within the City allowed under this alternative. Historic architectural resources would remain (as in the case of the No Action Alternative) less recognized and protected than they would under the General Plan.

h. Hazardous Materials. This alternative would not result in a significant impact from exposure to hazardous materials because substantial new industrial development would be unlikely to occur.

i. Noise. The rise in noise levels would not be significant since this alternative would not result in any significant new development along major roads. This would eliminate any increase in potential traffic noise impacts on adjacent residences and businesses.

j. Air Quality. Although air emissions from automobiles may rise with the natural increase in population, the impact on air quality would not likely be significant, as the increase in population would be small.

k. Infrastructure and Municipal Services. Because development and population growth would be limited under this alternative, there would likely be no significant impact on the City's infrastructure and ability to provide the same level of municipal services.

3. Alternative 3: Residential Community

a. Land Use and Public Policy. The major impact of this alternative would be the loss of adjacent agricultural lands for residential development. This alternative would designate 610 acres of surrounding agricultural land, including 390 acres for very low and low density residential development. As with the proposed project, this conversion would constitute a significant and unavoidable impact. This alternative also designates land for residential uses to the east and beyond the residential area designated in the General Plan; no buffer zone such as Fanoe Road is designated between residential uses and the viable farmland to the east. Policies and implementing actions of the General Plan would be applicable to this alternative.

b. Population, Housing and Employment. The Residential Community alternative would accommodate a buildout population of 13,000 but would likely result in a population between 10,000 to 12,000. Although many new residents would likely commute to jobs outside of the City, this alternative would result in a jobs/housing imbalance. Although many residents of the proposed very low and low density residential areas would likely commute to jobs outside of the City, this alternative does not designate enough land that would supply jobs to the remaining residents of Gonzales. These impacts would not, however, be significant under CEQA.

c. Traffic, Access and Circulation. There would potentially be a significant increase in traffic when compared with existing conditions or the General Plan, lowering the Level of Service (LOS) on many roads and intersections. However, mitigation measures could reduce these potential impact to less-than-significant levels. Service levels would probably be most affected during commute periods, particularly on major roads such as Highway 101 and Alta Street. Traffic could increase along Johnson Canyon Road as commuters living in the new residences east of Fanoe Road drive to and from Highway 101.

Alta Street could also likely to become more congested during commute hours. Workers driving to and from the designated industrial area located west of Alta Street and north of Gonzales River Road would be competing with road space along Alta Street with commuters living south of Gonzales River Road (see Figure 20). Additionally, traffic would also likely increase along downtown streets such as Fifth Street, as drivers hoping to avoid traffic along Alta Street, cross the downtown area to Highway 101. The alternative, however, does eliminate potential congestion at the Alta Street/Gonzales River Road intersection by designating additional collector streets from both the residential and industrial areas to Alta Street.

Congestion could occur at the northern and southern Highway 101/Alta Street interchanges, particularly during commute hours. Smooth-flowing traffic along Highway 101 would probably slow down near those interchanges as both commuters and workers enter and leave the highway during commuting hours.

Traffic could also increase as students living in the newer subdivisions located east of Highway 101 and west of Alta Street drive towards the City's three schools located between Gonzales Slough and Highway 101. School buses and cars driven by high school students would contribute to traffic levels, particularly along 5th Street, Johnson Canyon Road, the new C Street overpass, and Bella Vista Avenue. Parking in the City streets could also become an increasing problem.

d. Visual Resources. This alternative could have an effect on the City's resources. The scenic quality of the surrounding flat agricultural fields would potentially be obscured by the increase in residential development, particularly along the existing scenic Alta Street. Soundwalls placed along the east side of Highway 101 and the west side of Alta Street would also contribute to this visual impact. These effects would not be significant, however.

e. Soils, Geology and Hydrology. The development of up to 1,686 new dwelling units would increase the amount of runoff from residential areas entering the City's drainage system which subsequently enters Gonzales Slough. Requirements for storage ponds at new residential subdivisions would mitigate this impact, but some increased risk of flooding of Gonzales Slough would result, particularly in downstream areas.

If new developments are seismically sound, the risk of geologic hazards would not be significant.

f. Biotic Factors. Although development on existing agricultural land would destroy the habitat of some non-listed species that have adapted to an agricultural setting, the Residential Community Alternative would not significantly impact plant and wildlife.

g. Cultural Resources. Gonzales' historic and small-town character may be negatively affected by the transformation of the City to a "bedroom" community. Future development, including commercial development, is designated beyond the existing City limits and away from the City's historic downtown area, a development pattern that could diminish the future value of historic downtown structures as commercial outlets.

h. Hazardous Materials. This alternative designates 122 acres for industrial uses. Since the alternative designates industrial uses west of Alta Street and north of Gonzales River Road generally away from residential areas and schools, there would be no significant impacts from exposure to hazardous materials. Trucks carrying any potential hazardous materials would likely use Alta Street. The residences immediately south of Gonzales River Road would face limited risk of exposure to any hazardous materials that would potentially be used at the industrial sites north of Gonzales River Road.

i. Noise. Even with the development of soundwalls and acoustically-designed houses, noise levels would likely rise, due to the increase in the number of automobiles. Soundwalls would likely be placed east of Highway 101 and the area west of Alta Street that is near the very low density residences. Residences north and south of Johnson Canyon Road, west of the Fanoe extension, south of the C Street extension, and south of Gonzales River Road would also be affected by increases in traffic along those roads, particularly with the lack of soundwalls. Noise levels would not likely exceed standards as a result of industrial and manufacturing operations.

j. Air Quality. This alternative would accommodate a population of 13,000 persons at buildout; the number of automobiles would rise with population growth. There would be a significant impact on air quality as a result of increased auto emissions. State and federal standards would likely be exceeded, and the Air Quality Management Plan would be violated. Air quality impacts would be particularly significant on roads with heavy traffic (see Traffic, Access & Circulation, above).

k. Infrastructure and Municipal Services. The need for extensive and costly new infrastructure such as new roads, sewers, and drainage systems would be necessary to accommodate residential development. The City's three schools are currently suffering from overcrowding and new facilities would be necessary to accommodate the influx of new students that new residential development would bring.

As with the proposed project, there would be a significant impact on the ability to provide water services to all of the residents under the Residential Community Alternative. The Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin is currently suffering from overdraft and the Residential Community Alternative would exacerbate the problem (see Chapter IV, Infrastructure and Municipal Services).

4. Alternative 4: Commercial Center

a. Land Use and Public Policy. A significant unmitigable impact of this alternative would be the conversion of 511 acres of surrounding agricultural land for commercial, residential and industrial uses. Development under this alternative would also increase the potential of incompatible land use conflicts, particularly along the borders of urban and agricultural land uses. Land use incompatibilities that are not mitigated by applicable General Plan policies would subsequently result in an incompatibility with other relevant plans, such as the *Monterey County General Plan* and the *Central Salinas Valley Area Plan.*

b. Population, Housing and Employment. There would likely be no impact on the City's job/housing balance. This alternative designates a 50-acre tourist-oriented highway commercial development around the southern Highway 101 ramp, resulting in a significant increase in employment. This alternative also designates over 400 acres for residential uses.

c. Traffic, Access and Circulation. There would likely be some impacts on circulation and access. The largest impact could occur at the southern Highway 101 ramp as drivers leaving and entering the commercial center compete with the traffic flow of Highway 101 and Alta Street.

Traffic along Alta Street and Highway 101 could also increase as a result of the designated industrial area west of Alta Street and the predominantly single-family residences east of Highway 101 and Fanoe Road. Workers from the designated industrial areas north and south of Gonzales River Road would likely drive along Alta Street. Commuters from the residential areas east of the Highway 101 would use Highway 101. The increase in the number of drivers would possibly worsen access and circulation at the southern Highway 101 ramp.

d. Visual Resources. There could be an impact on existing visual resources as a result of development from this alternative. The impact on visual resources would be similar to the impacts of the Residential Community Alternative.

e. Soils, Geology and Hydrology. This alternative would allow development in areas subject to flooding, and changes to flood flows downstream may impact the drainage system and flood control facilities. This alternative would also likely increase the amount of runoff from commercial uses and other development, particularly around the highway commercial development clustered around the Highway 101 ramp.

f. Biotic Factors. There would likely be no significant impact on biotic resources under the Commercial Center Alternative. Although development on existing farmlands would occur under this alternative, the plant and animal species in the area would not be significantly impacted.

g. Cultural Resources. The Commercial Center Alternative would result in no significant impacts on cultural resources. Revenues earned from the commercial center would be used to upgrade the downtown area, including the City's historic structures.

h. Hazardous Materials. This alternative would designate 210 acres of land west of Alta Street for industrial uses. Although industrial uses may potentially use hazardous materials in their operations, there would be no significant impact from exposure to hazardous materials. The industrial uses would not be adjacent to large residential areas. Although a neighborhood commercial area is designated adjacent to the southern industrial parcel (south of Gonzales River Road), the commercial area is set back from the industrial uses; therefore, there would be no significant impact.

i. Noise. Noise levels would rise in the area of the southern interchange of Highway 101 as a result of the increased flow of traffic. However, this alternative designates residential areas away from the interchange. Noise levels in residential areas would unlikely exceed noise level standards, therefore resulting in no significant impact.

j. Air Quality. Air quality would probably increase as a result of the increase in automobile emissions. Auto emissions would likely be concentrated along the major routes of Highway 101 as residents east of Highway 101 commute to jobs outside of the City, and as shoppers drive to the commercial center at the southern Highway 101 interchange. Industrial emissions may also rise dependent upon the types of industries that operate west of Alta Street. Air quality may also be affected by construction-related emissions from new development east, west, and southwest of the City.

k. Infrastructure and Municipal Services. As with the Proposed Project and Residential Community Alternative, development under this alternative would result in an impact on water supply.

5. Alternative 5: Agricultural Center

a. Land Use and Public Policy. Buildout under this alternative would result in the loss of 478 acres of surrounding agricultural land, including 320 acres of prime agricultural soils west of the City. This alternative would likely

result in fewer potential land use incompatibilities between urban uses and prime farmland due to the comparatively smaller amounts of land designated for residential and commercial uses. Development under this alternative is primarily concentrated to the west of Alta Street and is agricultural-centered. Land use compatibilities that are not mitigated by General Plan policies would result in an incompatibility with the *Monterey County General Plan* and *Central Salinas Valley Area Plan.*

b. Population, Housing and Employment. This alternative would produce a strong industrial employment base. Using the proposed project's calculations for employment at buildout, agricultural industrial uses would result in 4,879 jobs.[2] Commercial uses on 28 acres would result in approximately 1,098 jobs.[3] A total of about 5,976 jobs would be created. This alternative provides insufficient housing for the projected number of employees resulting in a poor jobs/housing balance.

c. Traffic, Access and Circulation. Significant increases in truck traffic west of the City, particularly along Alta Street and Gonzales River Road, could potentially contribute to congestion on those roads, resulting in a significant impact. LOS levels along Alta Street may be reduced.

d. Visual Resources. This alternative would most likely have negative visual effects both west and east of the City. These effects would not, however, be significant under CEQA. Agricultural industries that would develop west of the City might include stacks of boxes, equipment and industrial buildings creating a negative visual effect along Alta Street and Gonzales River Road. Industrial uses could also block views from roadways of hills to the west. New low residential development east of Highway 101 could block existing views of flat farmlands from the highway.

e. Soils, Geology and Hydrology. The Agricultural Center Alternative would include 320 acres of prime agricultural soil west of the City for industrial use and about 158 acres of prime agricultural soils and soils of statewide significance east of Highway 101 for residential and commercial uses. Industrial runoff is likely to increase under this alternative.

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[2] Planned industrial square footage was estimated on the assumption that 320 acres of industrial area would develop at a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.5, yielding 6,577,560 square feet (SF) of industrial floor space. Employment density was calculated using existing density figures of 0.7 employees per 1,000 SF, resulting in 4,879 industrial jobs.

[3] At an FAR of 0.5, 28 acres would yield 609,840 SF of commercial floor space. Employment density of 1.8 commercial employees per 1,000 residents would yield about 1,098 jobs.

f. Biotic Factors. Although urban development under this alternative would result in the loss of habitat of species that have adapted to the agricultural settings east and west of the City, it would not have a significant impact.

g. Cultural Resources. This alternative would not have any significant impacts on Cultural Resources.

h. Hazardous Materials. Agricultural industries often use hazardous materials for processing. Unless these materials are properly stored and handled, there would be a potential impact from exposure to hazardous materials.

i. Noise. Noise from operations of existing industrial facilities varies, but was measured at a high of about 64-65 decibels (dB). Exterior noise level standards for residential are generally 60 dB. Residential units located west of Alta Street may potentially be adversely affected by noise impacts of this alternative. Noise levels from truck traffic along Alta Street is also likely to increase.

j. Air Quality. Emissions from industries, trucks, and automobiles would significantly affect the air quality at the City and surrounding region. Construction-related emissions could also potentially contribute to the impacts on air quality.

k. Infrastructure and Municipal Services. This alternative would affect the City's infrastructure and municipal services. The agricultural industries would require sufficient water supply to operate, affecting the City's water service. Additional wells in combination with water conservation methods such as the use of reclaimed water would be necessary. The City's sewage and drainage facilities would need to be extended and upgraded to accommodate this alternative.

C. Comparison of Alternatives

1. Land Use and Public Policy

With the exception of the No Development and No Project/Limited Development Alternatives, all of the alternatives would involve conversion of prime agricultural land to urban uses, a significant or unavoidable impact. The Residential Community Alternative would allow development of the most agricultural land, 610 acres, under buildout conditions.

The greatest potential for incompatibility between existing and proposed land uses would potentially occur with the Residential Community Alternative and the Commercial Center Alternative as urban uses intrude the most into agricultural areas. Although the Agricultural Center Alternative would convert 320 acres of agricultural land for industrial purposes, the agricultural industries would create fewer incompatibilities on adjacent farmlands. These potential incompatibilities would not be significant.

2. Population, Employment and Housing

Statewide concern for regional traffic congestion and air pollution has led to a concern for jobs/housing balance. An even jobs-housing balance, if balanced in term of wages and housing prices as well as number of jobs and housing units, can reduce commuting and improve regional traffic flow and air quality.

The alternatives would appeal to the market for housing for people who work in other areas, resulting in a worsened jobs/housing mix. However, this impact would not exceed the threshold of significance. The Residential Community Alternative would likely have the worst jobs/housing balance. An imbalance would also exist under the No Development and Commercial Center Alternatives. The Agricultural Center Alternative designates over 490 acres for industrial and commercial uses but provides insufficient housing for the projected number of employees for such development.

3. Circulation

Traffic would exceed existing roadway capacity at some locations under all the alternatives. Table 14 compares traffic generated by the Residential Community, Commercial Center, and Agricultural Center Alternatives. The Residential Community and Commercial Center Alternatives would have traffic exceeding roadway capacity on Fifth Street. The Agricultural Center Alternative would slightly exceed roadway capacity on Alta Street.

Circulation improvements included in the General Plan, along with mitigation measures recommended in this report, would probably reduce these impacts to less-than-significant levels in all but two cases. First, the Residential Community Alternative would cause unacceptable congestion along Fifth Street west of Highway 101. Second, the Agricultural Center Alternative would overload Alta Street immediately south of town. Each of these problem areas would require further traffic analysis in the event either of these alternatives were selected.

Table 14
PM PEAK HOUR
TWO-WAY TRAFFIC WITH AREA BUILDOUT
(Vehicles Per Hour)

Location	Two-Way Capacity[a]	Residential Community Alternative	Commercial Center Alternative	Agricultural Center Alternative
Alta - just north of town	1,250	800	925	1,260[b]
Alta - just south of town	1,250	735	860	1,370[b]
5th Street - west of 101 freeway	600	790[b]	720[b]	530
C Street - east of Alta	600	545	565	60

[a] Level of Service C.
[b] Unacceptable operation - volume greater than capacity.

Source: Crane Transportation Group

The Commercial Center Alternative would require and would provide more parking for the increase in commercial development. The construction of a new freeway overpass under the Residential Community and Commercial Center Alternatives would take traffic onto residential streets in the existing city. Truck traffic would be high under the Commercial Center alternative and higher under the Agricultural Center Alternative, which emphasizes industrial development. Pedestrian circulation would be improved under the Residential Community Alternative with the creation of new paths in Gonzales Slough.

4. Visual Resources

With the exception of the No Project/Limited Development Alternative, the Proposed Project and the other alternatives would affect visual quality to varying degrees. Under the No Project alternative, there would be no policies protecting visual resources from uncoordinated development and growth. Under the Commercial Center Alternative, development of large-scale visitor-serving uses near the gateway to the City would have a negative visual effect if landscaping is not provided. Under the Residential Community Alternative, views from south Alta Street to the hills to the west would be blocked by proposed very low density development.

5. Soils, Geology and Hydrology

Exposure to seismic risk increases with the amount of development and with concentration of development on loosely consolidated soils. By placing more of the development east and southeast of Highway 101, the Proposed Project minimizes the amount of development on loosely consolidated soils. The Residential Community Alternative would accommodate the most development and thus increase the number of people exposed to area seismic risks. The Residential Community Alternative would expose the most people to seismic risks and the Agricultural Center Alternative would result in the least exposure.

Flood flows would also increase under all the alternatives, but runoff would be greatest under the Commercial Center Alternative, because the most impervious surface would be created.

6. Biotic Factors

The potential for disturbing rare or endangered species would be low under all the alternatives, as rare or endangered species are not very common on the agricultural lands adjacent to the City. However, species that have adapted to the agricultural lands would be affected in areas of development. The Residential Community Alternative would cause the most impact, converting the most agricultural land .

7. Cultural Resources

Gonzales has a number of historic buildings and sites. Most of the existing historic buildings are located in or near Downtown. The Proposed Project, by designating a Historic District, would increase the public's awareness of the City's historic resources, and could potentially encourage the protection and rehabilitation of these buildings.

No known archaeological remains exist in Gonzales, but unknown remains are more likely to be discovered as higher amounts of land are developed. Thus, Alternative 2, the Residential Community Alternative, which disturbs the greatest acreage, would have the highest likelihood of disturbing these resources. Once an archaeological site is disturbed, the impacts would be the same under any alternative. However, the proposed alternative includes a policy to protect archaeological resources if found.

8. Hazardous Materials

With its industrial emphasis, the Agricultural Center Alternative would most likely bring the most hazardous elements into the City, subsequently bringing the highest risk of exposing people to hazardous materials. Commercial establishments such as auto sales and service, dry cleaners, photo processors, beauty salons and others would also produce some risk of exposure to hazardous materials. The Residential Community and Commercial Center Alternatives would result in the largest increase in these types of businesses.

9. Noise

Residences would be exposed to noise levels exceeding 60 dB near Highway 101 and Fifth Street under all the alternatives. Noise levels for residents on C Street would also increase. The high level of truck traffic under the Proposed Project and, to a lesser extent, the Commercial Center Alternative, would increase noise levels on truck routes. Trucks would increase along Alta Street from the northern off-ramp to 8th Street and south off-ramp to Gonzales River Road, and on the new overpass in the Commercial Center Alternative.

10. Air Quality

Traffic volume, traffic congestion, and industry affect air quality. The Residential Community Alternative would have the most substantial impact on air quality. This alternative would result in the largest population increase; thereby resulting in the largest number of cars and auto emissions. The Agricultural Community Alternative would have the next worst impact due to the increased truck traffic and industrial emissions.

11. Infrastructure and Municipal Services

All of the alternatives would increase the demand for public services. With the exception of the No Development and No Project/Limited Development Alternative, all of the alternatives and the Proposed Project would result in a water supply impact. The Residential Community Alternative would place the greatest demand on the City's infrastructure municipal services because it result in the greatest population and buildout.

D. Environmentally Superior Alternative

The alternatives are compared to the General Plan in Tables 15 and 16.

The No Project/Limited Development Alternative is identified as the environmentally superior alternative. This alternative would prohibit all future development beyond City limits, thereby protecting adjacent prime agricultural lands from urban development that otherwise would have been converted under all of the other alternatives, including the Proposed Project. This alternative would also have the least impact on plant and animal life on the adjacent farmlands. Plant and animal species would be protected along Gonzales Slough whereas other alternatives would allow development that could threaten species along the Slough.

The No Project/Limited Development Alternative would have a less than significant impact on visual resources, cultural resources, and hazardous materials. This alternative would also have the least impact on noise, air quality, circulation, infrastructure and municipal services, and soils, geology and hydrology.

The No Project/Limited Development Alternative, however, would fall short of the City's objectives due to its effects on housing. Gonzales' population would continue to grow at natural increase rates, but with insufficient housing to accommodate population growth. This would likely result in overcrowding living conditions and out-migration.

Table 15
ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

	No Development (Existing Conditions)		Residential Community				Commercial Center				Agriculture Center			
			Buildout Population 13,000[b]				Buildout Population 11,000[b]				Buildout Population 9,000[b]			
			Additional		Total		Additional		Total		Additional		Total	
	Units	Acres[a]	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Residential[c]	1,393	191	1,686	470	3,225	661	1,241	230	2,780	421	776	148	2,315	339
Commercial		18		13		43		70		148		28		46
Industrial		128		122		250		210		338		320		448
Public/Quasi-Public		78		19		97		15		93		6		84
Total Acres Designated				624				525				502		
Acres of Agricultural Land Designated for Urban Uses				610				511				478		

[a] Based on 1994 figures.
[b] Assumes 4.0 persons/household.
[c] Includes Very Low, Low, Medium and High Densities.

Note: Projections for the No Project/Limited Development Alternative are not included due to the uncertainty of the location, type, and level of future development.

Table 16
COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES WITH PROPOSED PROJECT
(After Mitigation)

Environmental Factor	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 No Development (Existing Conditions)	Alternative 2 No Project/ Limited Development	Alternative 3 Residential Community	Alternative 4 Commercial Center	Alternative 5 Agricultural Center
Land Use and Public Policy	SU	--	N	SU	SU	SU
Population, Housing and Employment	N	--	N	N	N	N
Traffic, Access & Circulation	LS	--	N	SU	LS	SU
Visual Resources	N	--	N	N	N	N
Soils, Geology & Hydrology	N	--	N	N	N	N
Biotic Factors	N	--	N	N	N	N
Cultural Resources	N	--	N	N	N	N
Hazardous Materials	N	--	N	N	N	N
Noise	N	--	N	N	N	N
Air Quality	SU	--	N	SU	SU	SU
Infrastructure and Municipal Services	SU	--	N	SU	SU	SU

SU = Significant and unavoidable
LS = Mitigable to less-than-significant level
N = No significant impacts
-- = The No Development Alternative represents existing conditions and as such is not evaluated in the same terms as future development alternatives.

Chapter VI
CEQA REQUIRED DISCUSSIONS

■ ■ ■

This chapter presents discussions that are required by the California Environmental Quality Act and guidelines to the Act. Growth inducement, irreversible changes to the environment, and cumulative impacts are addressed in this chapter. Unavoidable significant impacts are summarized in Chapter II.

The construction of development projects and infrastructure associated with development would have project-specific impacts. All projects should be analyzed, as necessary, on a project-by-project basis pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines.

A. Growth Inducement

The CEQA Guidelines define growth inducement as the promotion of population or economic growth, or the construction of new housing. The purpose of a General Plan, such as the Proposed Project, is to provide for orderly and planned growth within a specified planning area. The General Plan designates areas for future development and requires that the growth occur within the incorporated area of the City. To that end, the General Plan includes policies that all unincorporated areas designed for development be included within the proposed Sphere of Influence for future annexation to the City.

The General Plan would directly induce population, employment and economic growth with the designation of lands for future residential, commercial, and industrial development. The Plan designates 277 acres for the development of 1,580 additional dwelling units. Under buildout conditions, this would directly result in a population increase of approximately 6,116 persons; total population at buildout is projected to be 11,578 persons.

The General Plan designates about 325 acres for industrial/manufacturing uses, 21 acres for commercial uses, 18 acres for downtown mixed-uses, and 135 acres for public/quasi-public uses. Full development would result in more than 5,700 jobs under buildout conditions by 2015. Industrial and commercial development would also result in the City's economic growth. Additionally, the increase in the number of available jobs in Gonzales would induce an increase in the City's population as workers look for housing in the City.

The General Plan also designates approximately 50 acres around the City's wastewater treatment plant for future expansion that would accommodate the Plan's projected growth. Under Plan policies, expansion of the plant would occur commensurate with future development and growth. This would remove the obstacle of an inadequate wastewater treatment facility and would not hinder growth. Population growth and development of industries under the General Plan would also require expanding and upgrading the City's infrastructure and municipal services. Because the land is flat and there are no physical impediments to growth, the infrastructure improvements are also contributors to future growth.

The General Plan also includes a Circulation Diagram that identifies future roads and the realignment or expansion of existing roads. The area east of Highway 101 would receive extensive circulation improvements including the extension of Fanoe Road to the north and Herold Parkway to the south. Although these improvements to the City's circulation would reduce future traffic impacts in the Planning Area and City to acceptable levels, the infrastructure would also indirectly induce growth to the City. The expansion of the City's circulation system would make the City more accessible to outerlying areas while reducing potential congestion within urban areas.

B. Irreversible Changes

This section discusses significant irreversible changes to the environment, including the loss of nonrenewable resources, which would result from buildout of the General Plan.

1. Land Use

Under buildout of the General Plan, a significant irreversible change would be the conversion of approximately 525 acres of prime farmland and farmland of statewide significance to urban uses.

2. Population, Employment and Housing

The General Plan would not result in any significant irreversible impacts on population, housing and employment in Gonzales.

3. Traffic, Access and Circulation

Traffic congestion currently rarely occurs in Gonzales which generally has a Level of Service (LOS) of "A" on most City streets and intersections. Even with adopted General Plan policies that would effectively reduce traffic levels to acceptable standards, traffic would nonetheless irrevocably increase as a result of an increase in population, industries and commercial businesses.

As development occurs beyond the existing City limits on undeveloped land, new streets would be created. Additionally, the General Plan proposes the extension and realignment of existing streets to accommodate future growth, as shown in Figure 9, the Circulation Diagram. These alterations and expansions to the City's existing circulation system would be significant irreversible changes, as defined by the CEQA Guidelines.

4. Visual Resources

Buildout under the General Plan would result in the conversion of approximately 525 acres of adjacent farmland to urban development. The General Plan contains policies that would prevent or reduce potential negative effects on visual quality to less than significant levels. However, although the General Plan would not result in any significant visual impact, views from roadways such as Highway 101 and Gonzales River Road would nonetheless be irrevocably changed with new development.

5. Soils, Geology and Hydrology

Buildout under the General Plan would result in the irreversible conversion of approximately 525 acres of farmland with prime soils. Increased runoff from increased impervious surface would irrevocably increase the rate of runoff and flood potential.

6. Biotic Factors

Development under the General Plan would not result in any significant impacts on plant and animal species, as discussed in Chapter IV, Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures. However, the development of farmlands for urban uses would still result in the loss of some plants and animals that

have adapted to the agricultural environment; this loss would therefore be irreversible.

7. Cultural Resources

Unknown archaeological sites could be disturbed or covered as a result of the General Plan.

8. Hazardous Materials

The General Plan designates 193 acres of undeveloped land for industrial/manufacturing uses that could potentially use hazardous materials. Policies contained in the General Plan reduce the risk of human exposure to hazardous materials from industrial, agricultural and household uses. However, in the improbable case that an accident involving the use, handling, or transport of hazardous does occur, the resulting damage may be irreversible.

9. Noise

Although Plan policies would reduce noise levels to acceptable standards, the increase in traffic and the development of industries would nonetheless result in irreversible increases in noise levels in the City, particularly in areas adjacent to major roadways and noise-producing industries.

10. Air Quality

A higher population than projected by the Monterey Bay Area Air Quality Management District would lead to a cumulative long-term increase in pollutants in the North Central Coast Area air basin, thus detrimentally affecting an irreplaceable resource.

11. Infrastructure and Municipal Services

Development and growth under the General Plan would require an increase in water supply, contributing to the existing overdraft problem of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. Although groundwater levels could potentially be restored, damage to the basin as a result of overdrafting, such as sea water intrusion, would be irreversible.

12. Additional Irreversible Changes

Fossil fuels and aggregate resources would be consumed in the construction of development projects. Increased vehicular traffic volumes would result in greater daily fuel consumption after improvements are completed.

C. Cumulative Impacts

The City of Gonzales is located on Highway 101 in the Salinas Valley. The Central Salinas Valley Area Plan[1] covers all lands between the communities of Chualar in the north and San Lucas in the south. In addition to Gonzales, the major cities included in the Area Plan are Chualar, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City, all of which are located along Highway 101, as shown in Figure 1 of this EIR. Gonzales and the other cities serve as population and economic activity centers in the Central Salinas Valley and share common characteristics. They are all essentially surrounded by prime farmlands and consequently serve as support centers for nearby agricultural operations.

The Central Salinas Valley Area Plan (1987) includes the assumption that residential, commercial, and industrial growth will continue to be concentrated with the area's major cities and that the area's growth rate will follow historic patterns. In the absence of more recent regional growth projections, this section discusses the cumulative impacts that would occur if growth in these cities and the unincorporated area along Highway 101 in the Central Salinas Valley were to accelerate to the level envisioned by the Gonzales General Plan. In this way, the impact conclusions with regard to cumulative impacts will be conservative (i.e., ensure that impacts are not overlooked).

1. Land Use

Under buildout projections of the General Plan, Gonzales would convert about 525 acres of surrounding agricultural land for urban uses. Should similar development occur in other Central Salinas Valley cities along Highway 101, there would be a significant loss of productive agricultural land in Salinas Valley.

Expansion of each of the city's limits for urban development would need to be approved by the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO). Development

[1] The Central Salinas Valley Area Plan is one of eight area plans of the Monterey County General Plan.

on adjacent farmland would also need to be consistent with policies of regional plans including the Monterey County General Plan and the Salinas Valley Area Plan.

2. Population, Employment and Housing

The population of Gonzales was approximately 5,800 persons in 1994. Under buildout projections of the General Plan, the population of Gonzales would nearly double to 11,578 residents by 2015, the Plan's horizon year. Similar population growth in the other regional cities would generate cumulative impacts on circulation, noise, air quality, and municipal services as described below.

3. Traffic, Access and Circulation

U.S. Highway 101 is the primary north-south arterial within Monterey County. The four lane highway traverses the center of the Central Salinas Valley for approximately 48 miles, connecting all of the cities. Highway 101 is also the County's most prominent trucking thoroughfare and the principal transport route for goods and services into, out of, and through the valley. Cumulative growth in the Central Salinas Valley would therefore have a significant impact on existing traffic conditions along Highway 101. Traffic congestion would likely result along both directions of the highway, particularly during peak commute hours.

4. Visual Resources

The stretch of Highway 101 in the Central Salinas Valley provides views of flat, expansive agricultural fields on both sides. The Gabilan Mountain Range to east and the Sierra de Salinas and Santa Lucia Ranges to the west are visible in the distance. Cumulative growth in the valley, particularly in the major cities along Highway, 101 would have a significant impact on scenic views from Highway 101. As with the City of Gonzales, Highway 101 runs through the center of cities such as Chualar and Greenfield. Views of the agricultural fields and distant mountain ranges from both sides of Highway 101 would become increasingly disrupted by cumulative growth and development in the cities and unincorporated areas.

5. Soils, Geology and Hydrology

The soils found in the Salinas Valley are among the best agricultural soils in the country and have contributed to making the Salinas Valley the most

productive vegetable district in the world.[2] Under the *Important Farmlands Inventory System* of the USDA Soil Conservation Service, most of the Central Salinas Valley floor is classified as prime farmlands, farmlands of statewide importance, unique farmlands, or farmlands of local importance.[3]

Cumulative growth in Gonzales and the other cities would increase the risk of exposure to earthquake impacts. The Central Salinas Valley contains several faults, the most significant fault being the active San Andreas Fault which runs in a north-south direction to the east of Gonzales. The Central Salinas Valley has been the epicenter of four major earthquakes in the past three decades. A major earthquake on the San Andreas Fault could cause severe ground-shaking, partial or complete destruction of structures, and possibly even human casualties.[4]

Cumulative growth among the cities would also increase the risk of exposure to flood hazards. Gonzales and the other cities to the north and south lie along the flood-prone floor of the Salinas Valley. The major cause of flooding is surface runoff caused when the amount of rainfall exceeds the soil's capacity to absorb water. Another source of potential flooding is failure of Nacimiento and San Antonio dams which could inundate much of the valley floor, with the most probable cause being seismic activity.

6. Biotic Factors

Wildlife in the Central Salinas Valley is diverse and abundant despite the intense cultivation of the valley floor. Throughout the natural and cultivated areas, small mammals, reptiles, and birds typical of central California are found in fairly consistent populations. The farmlands surrounding cities such as Gonzales, Chualar, Soledad, Greenfield and King City contain similar species that have adapted to the agricultural environment. Although growth under the Gonzales General Plan would not result in a significant impact on plant and animals species in the Gonzales Planning Area, cumulative growth along the Central Salinas Valley could potentially result in a significant decrease in plant and wildlife populations.

[2] Central Salinas Valley Area Plan, 1993.

[3] The Land Use and Soils sections of Chapter IV of this report provide further discussions on the important farmlands categories.

[4] Central Salinas Area Plan, 1993.

7. Cultural Resources

The history of the Central Salinas Valley has been traced at least 6,000 years, and perhaps as much as 10,000 years prior to the Spanish colonization of Monterey County. The County has established archaeological sensitivity zones of low, moderate, and high, to indicate the probability of an archaeological site in a given location. The valley floor that contains the cities along Highway 101, such as Gonzales, was designated a low sensitivity zone primarily because after being extensively farmed, any potential archaeological sites which may have existed were likely destroyed long ago. Cumulative growth would therefore have little impact on archaeological resources.

Like the City of Gonzales, each city along Highway 101 in the Central Salinas Valley contains its own local history. Although cumulative growth in the valley would unlikely have direct impacts on each city, development within each city could potentially have an impact on its historic sites and structures.

8. Hazardous Materials

As of 1987, there were 284 businesses in the Central Salinas Valley that store hazardous materials. Most hazardous materials are transported along Highway 101 and the Southern Pacific Railroad. The production, storage, and use of hazardous materials could threaten the health and safety of adjacent residents if improperly managed. These health and safety hazards may appear as leaks or spills contaminating the air or water, creating fires, or causing explosions.

Cumulative growth in Gonzales and adjacent cities would likely result in an increase in industries that use and store hazardous materials, as well as an increase in the amount of hazardous materials transported to, from and through these cities. Coinciding with cumulative population growth, the risk of human exposure to hazardous materials would increase but would not reach the threshold of being a significant adverse impact.

The use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers on agricultural lands could also become an increasing risk for residents as the cities in the valley expand outward onto adjacent farmlands. The most immediate hazard resulting from agricultural production is the contamination of surface and groundwater.

9. Noise

Cumulative growth in the Central Salinas Valley cities would significantly increase traffic levels along Highway 101 which is the major transportation route to and from the north and south. The cumulative increase in traffic on Highway 101 would result in a significant noise impact on residents and businesses located near the highway. Additionally, growth would likely place more development adjacent to the highway, resulting in an increase in the number of residents that would be exposed to high noise levels.

10. Air Quality

Traffic increases throughout all of the cities and along major routes such as Highway 101 would increase the level of automobile emissions into the air. Air quality would also be affected by cumulative growth of industries with high emission levels, and construction activities that emit particulates into the air. These effects on air quality would not represent a significant adverse impact, assuming that such development remained consistent with growth projections in the AQMP and MBUAPCD rules and regulations.

11. Infrastructure and Municipal Services

An expansion of infrastructure and public services would be needed as a result of cumulative growth. Wastewater treatment facilities would need to be expanded as cumulative growth occurs. Police and fire services would need to be expanded and schools would continue to be crowded.

Groundwater would be needed for urban development. However, overall demand on groundwater supply could decrease, as urban uses demand less water per acre than agricultural uses. Even so, new development would interfere with groundwater recharge, a significant impact.

Chapter VII
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Appendix A

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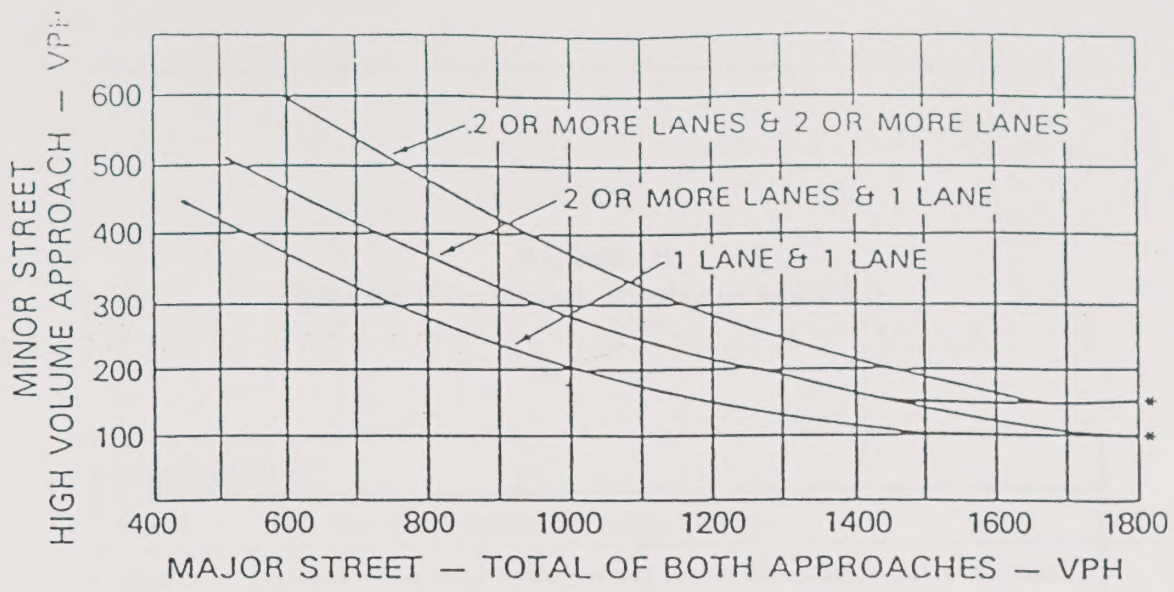
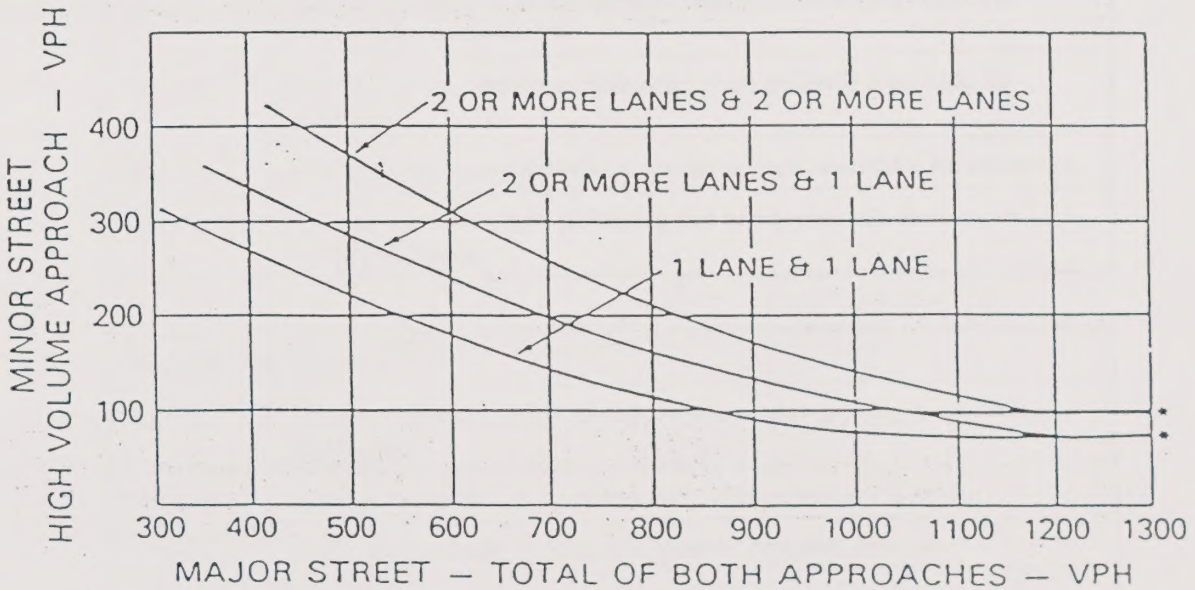


*NOTE: 150 VPH APPLIES AS THE LOWER THRESHOLD VOLUME FOR A MINOR STREET APPROACH WITH TWO OR MORE LANES AND 100 VPH APPLIES AS THE LOWER THRESHOLD VOLUME FOR A MINOR STREET APPROACHING WITH ONE LANE.

(COMMUNITY LESS THAN 10,000 POPULATION OR ABOVE 40 MPH ON MAJOR STREET)



*NOTE: 100 VPH APPLIES AS THE LOWER THRESHOLD VOLUME FOR A MINOR STREET APPROACH WITH TWO OR MORE LANES AND 75 VPH APPLIES AS THE LOWER THRESHOLD VOLUME FOR A MINOR STREET APPROACHING WITH ONE LANE.

Appendix B
Soil Capability Classes, Subclasses, and Units

■ ■ ■

Capability Classes	
Class I	Soils have few limitations that restrict their use.
Class II	Soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.
Class III	Soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants, require special conservation practices, or both.
Class IV	Soils have very severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants, require very careful management, or both.
Class V	Soils are not likely to erode but have other limitations, impractical to remove, that limit their use.
Class VI	Soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation.
Class VII	Soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuitable for cultivation.
Class VIII	Soils and landforms have limitations that nearly preclude their use of commercial plants.

Capability Subclasses	
Subclass e	The main limitation is risk of erosion unless close-growing plant cover is maintained.
Subclass w	Water in or on the soil interferes with plant growth or cultivation.
Subclass s	Soil is limited mainly because it is shallow, droughty, or stony.
Subclass c	Chief limitation is climate that is too cold or too dry.

Capability Units	
Unit 0	A problem or limitation caused by sand and gravel in the substratum that limits root penetration.
Unit 1	Accelerated or potential erosion hazard.
Unit 2	A problem or limitation of wetness caused by poor drainage or flooding.
Unit 3	A problem or limitation caused by slow or very slow permeability of the subsoil or substratum.
Unit 4	A problem or limitation caused by coarse soil texture or excessive gravel.
Unit 5	A problem or limitation caused by a fine textured or very fine textured surface layer.
Unit 6	A problem or limitation caused by salt or alkali.
Unit 7	A problem or limitation caused by cobbles, stones, or rocks.
Unit 8	A problem or limitation caused by nearly impervious bedrock or hardpan within the effective rooting depth.
Unit 9	A problem or limitation caused by low fertility or by toxicity.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Monterey County, California*, 1978.

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